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**HUMAN PROBLEMS
IN
BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA**

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ELIZABETH COLSON and MAX GLUCKMAN

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HISTORY IN A CHANGING SOCIETY¹

by

J. A. BARNES

IN non-literate societies there is, strictly speaking, no history; for there are no documents, and history, in the sense of historiography, is essentially the study of contemporary documents. There are only legends, by which to a greater or less degree present conditions are related to or explained by alleged former conditions.² In fully literate societies with a well-documented past legends take different forms and it is often difficult to distinguish legend from history. In modern societies many socially significant legends relate to the immediate past rather than to antiquity. It is of interest therefore to examine what kinds of legend are current in societies shifting from non-literacy to literacy and to what extent they have a history.

In many Western cultures the earliest surviving documents are chronicles or codes of law. At an early stage writing was employed to record fact of wide interest rather than things of significance only to a few. When Africans first become literate they employ their skill in writing letters to one another. Only later do individuals begin to write essays, histories and novels and so develop a vernacular literature. They learn to write in an environment already containing a great quantity of vernacular printed matter issuing from European-controlled sources. The spatial separation of kinsfolk and friends brought about by labour migration makes letter-writing worth while and the ephemeral nature of these pencil-written documents is no disadvantage. It requires greater resources than most individuals and Native Authorities can muster to produce a family or tribal chronicle in permanent form.

The Fort Jameson Ngoni³ are at this stage of transition. Many men and some women can read, if not write, and we can no longer call the tribe non-literate. Yet a society of this kind behaves in many ways as if it were non-literate. In particular, information about the past is transmitted orally and laws and customs are not committed to writing. In this paper I shall discuss some of the ways in which this information is manipulated. I shall distinguish between tales of fighting, relating to the period 1821-98, which we may regard as

¹ Read at the Birmingham meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Section H, 1st September 1950. This article is also to appear in the journal, *Human Relations*, under the title, 'The Perception of History in a Plural Society: A Study of an Ngoni Group in Northern Rhodesia'.

² Cf. Evans-Pritchard, 'Marett lecture', p. 121.

³ I worked among these people during 1946-9 while on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.

tribal legends of origin; beliefs about customary behaviour relating to the same period; private legends which serve to explain the form of relations between present-day groups; and lastly, history proper, in documents describing contemporary events, if such exist.

Early travellers all speak of the various Ngoni groups as fierce warrior tribes interested only in destruction and plunder. With the spread of European control Ngoni raids ceased. To-day in villages inhabited mainly by women and children, with scraggy animals and eroded gardens, the traveller looking for signs of a military tradition sees only khaki greatcoats and battledress. Among the Fort Jameson group, if not elsewhere, the great cowhide shields, and the regiments which carried them, have disappeared. Yet the battles of the past are still remembered and are called to mind in songs sung at drunken parties, in tales told to children and, importunately, to sympathetic strangers. Many of these songs are in the old Ngoni language, now largely forgotten, and singers cannot give any precise meaning to the songs they sing. They are the relics of the past learnt parrot-fashion; and in the context in which they are sung they do not require any specific reference. In our own culture we do not need to know who were the April rainers before we can sing 'Green grow the rashes, O'. Prose tales, however, are in ordinary speech and describe military exploits of people known to the speaker, or preparations for raiding ordered by the Paramount Chief and carried out by his lieutenants. The most frequently recounted battle of all is the fight between Ngoni and British troops in 1898. Many men and women are still alive who remember the fighting or even took part in it. The cataclysmic changes which followed the Ngoni defeat and the unusual weapons used combine to make the battle memorable. It is the only admitted defeat, for all other tales tell only of victory. The Ngoni defeated the Bemba, Wisa, Cewa, Kunda, and so on.

We know from contemporary travellers' accounts that though, on the whole, the Ngoni were successful against their neighbours, their run of successes was not unbroken. There is evidence that on occasion even the Cewa raided the Ngoni and took captives. We may regard the form taken by these legends as due in part to the process found in most cultures by which victories are remembered and defeats forgotten. But the distortion introduced is not only the elimination of defeat. The administration and the missions have, in general, encouraged co-operation between tribes and have treated all tribes as equals. They have emphasized the values of peace rather than of war, and have condemned pagan rites. In the light of this teaching legends have been modified to conform to modern values. The barbarity of the raids has been minimized and the good qualities of the old military discipline have been extolled. Sometimes men say that the old armies never fought but only danced, or that people from other tribes were not captured but all joined the Ngoni of their own free will (as in fact some did). It is said that there was never any ancestor-worship; the names of the Paramount Chief's ancestors

were merely mentioned in prayers 'as King George is mentioned now'. This process by which the Ngoni conquerors of yesterday are made to look like the European conquerors of to-day is no new phenomenon. The Ngoni identified themselves with Europeans rather than with their matrilineal neighbours even before the European conquest. Wiese, himself the main agent of their defeat, wrote 'They are very proud, looking down on all the other tribes with contempt, and think they show great courtesy whenever they assure the European traveller that the Whites may be related to them'.⁴ Another traveller, arriving from the south in 1896, relates how he ran into an armed patrol on the outskirts of Ngoni country. His own carriers ran away but he called out to the patrol that he was a friend of the Paramount Chief, speaking in Zulu. He then heard them saying 'He is an Ngoni and a white man'.⁵ My own informants told me that the old Ngoni language was closer to English than to Nyanja.

This reinterpretation of the past in the light of the present has not produced a consistent picture of a proto-European society. The inconsistencies of the present remain and are reflected in the ambivalent attitude adopted to the past. Although in one context people recall that everything was well ordered and peaceful in the past, in other contexts they dwell on the unlimited power of the Paramount Chief and the fierceness of his warriors. An aristocratic man once said to me at a beer party, 'If this was the old days I would kill all these Cewa drinking here'. Yet the general impression which people usually try to convey is of a disciplined, proud, and successful people.

This picture is accepted not only by Ngoni themselves but also by Europeans. For us it is one part of the good old days when Africans still smiled and were nature's gentlemen. Our picture of the Ngoni contains fewer concessions to contemporary White values, for the very distinction between Whites now and Blacks then increases the attractiveness of the picture. Ancestor worship and polygyny are not unwelcome in a Black Arcadia.

Ngoni nowadays compare themselves with their European and Indian neighbours and envy their apparent power and wealth. They seek to rationalize their own relative failure in terms of their past. It is in this connexion that the defeat of 1898 is important. Although they claim to have conquered all their African neighbours, Ngoni do not claim success over the British. Instead, defeat at the hands of the British is cited in explanation of every present-day failure and of every departure from traditional practice. Ngoni say 'If we had not been defeated we would not have lost our land and we would not now go hungry'; and 'If we had not been defeated the tribes

⁴ Wiese, 'Geschichte', pp. 200f.

⁵ Later, when he had satisfactorily answered questions on Zululand geography, Mpezeni said of him, 'He is a chief . . . he is an Angoni, one of us.' Deare, 'Slave raiders,' pp. 19 and 25.

would not have been mixed up and we could follow our customs properly', and so on. In the past, captives taken by the Ngoni were rapidly indoctrinated with Ngoni ways and themselves became proud Ngoni; Ngoni complain that now, although captured by Europeans, they never become Europeans.

The general legends of the past from which these notions are derived are common knowledge. In the main they are passed on orally and are maintained by the teaching of tribal history in schools, the appeals to old military traditions when recruiting for the Northern Rhodesia Regiment, the conversations of planters comparing one tribe with another as labourers, by the reports of administrators, and by the writings of ethnologists.

The link between the Ngoni of to-day and their illustrious forbears is also symbolized in the office of the Paramount Chief. He bears the name of his warrior great-grandfather, and the formal aspects of his relationship to his people are explained by reference to his ancestors' achievements. He cannot attend funerals or take part in some of his own marriage ceremonies because 'he has already conquered all others'; he cannot be expected to walk through the bush with the District Officer because 'he has already conquered the whole world'. He basks in his great-grandfather's invincibility, for in this context the defeat of 1898 is forgotten. The relationship between the Paramount Chief and his eleven minor chiefs is partly determined by the distribution of power in different branches of the royal lineage before European conquest, and the division of the country into these minor chiefdoms is a visible reminder of that distribution.

Associated with these tales of military exploits and royal power are myths about former customs. Ngoni say that in the old days they used to hunt, or marry, or build villages, in a particular way and that now they do differently. Frequently when I asked what happened in such-and-such a situation I would be told what my informant thought would have happened before 1898 rather than what he had seen happen now. Thus if we ask what payments do Ngoni make in marriage we are told that there are two payments, 'snuff-box' and bridewealth, consisting of one or more beasts. Further inquiry reveals that these payments are now made only infrequently and that the period referred to is before 1898. More detailed investigation suggests that in many pre-1898 marriages they were not made and that when they were made they did not always consist of beasts. Ngoni do not deny these facts but they do deny their relevance. To them, the distinctively Ngoni way of marrying is with these two payments and it is this process alone which merits the vernacular adjective—*cingoni*. They regret that people no longer marry in this way and blame the Europeans for it; but it remains part of the distinctive cultural heritage of the tribe.

As we might expect, notions of this kind do not provide sanctioned standards of conduct nor ideal patterns towards which Ngoni strive. They may be used to explain or justify a state of affairs, as we have

seen, but they do not directly determine action. An individual who departs from traditional custom, in these terms, is not necessarily censured. Indeed, men who are knowledgeable about the glorious past do not follow traditional ways any more than do less well-informed people. According to tradition the Ngoni are a virilocal people yet if a man goes to live with his wife's relatives his own kinsfolk cannot force him to return by appeal to this virilocal tradition. Traditionally a man avoids his mother-in-law. Yet I once saw an aristocratic man, a great authority on traditional history, on leave from work sitting on a verandah chatting with his mother-in-law. I said to him 'I thought a man should avoid his mother-in-law'. He laughed and replied, 'Yes, so he should. This behaviour is disgusting and as soon as I come to live here permanently I shall see that customs are properly followed.'

In certain situations the Fort Jameson Ngoni appear as a tribe in contrast to other tribes. The tribe is an administrative unit, with its own chiefs, its own area and sometimes its own District Officer. Representatives from each tribe in the region sit together to form the Native Urban Court and the Provincial Advisory Council. The Ngoni representatives on these bodies tend to present distinctively Ngoni views to contrast with the views of their colleagues. Thus there may be a discussion on wills. There is an Ngoni view, a Cewa view, and so on. The Ngoni representative repeats the old story about bridewealth, virilocal residence, the rights of the eldest son, and these are recorded as being the Ngoni custom in the matter. Even when discussing such an apparently modern issue as wills, the tendency is to go back to this mythical past. It is in terms of this past, in reality as well as in myth, that Ngoni are different from their neighbours. In the present, as contrasted with Europeans, Ngoni and Cewa are much the same. Ngoni pay bridewealth in the same way as the English eat roast beef. It is a national characteristic, but one located in the minds of men rather than observable in their actions or their aspirations. Instead of the scarifications and totemic observances which distinguish their neighbours Ngoni express their tribal identity by having distinctive customs which, conveniently, need not be followed.

In the Native Urban Court a similar process appears to operate, but here, unlike at the Advisory Council, there is a greater need to come to grips with real situations which require action, and tribal distinctiveness is tempered with practical reality. In the purely Ngoni Native Courts appeals are made to traditional practice in a different way. The courts are required by the Administration to follow tribal custom and people know that the courts are bound in this way. In fact, however, the courts have continually to deal with new situations and to make decisions which are unprecedented. This is done under the guise of drawing attention to some good Ngoni custom which has been neglected. Thus for example a man came to court saying that he was always quarrelling with his wife and that he wished

to divorce her. The bench granted the divorce and awarded the woman 30s. damages. The litigant protested. The junior member of the bench, a man aged about 25 years, said 'Don't you know, it has always been the custom in this court to award 30s. damages against men who divorce their wives'. Yet this was a comparatively recent practice and the litigant's protest seemed, to me, to be quite justified. The young man had been on the bench only about eighteen months. Even without Administrative stimulus, deliberate acts of legislation are not unknown among the Ngoni, but they require considerable discussion and probably a tribal meeting. It is easier, particularly for a court member as junior as the man in question, to appeal to the unwritten corpus of tribal custom when introducing a new rule. An analogous process in our own society is perhaps concealed under the fiction that judges do not make law. Ngoni do not quote specific precedents in court; and in this undocumented environment new decisions, if they are not soon challenged, become part of what has always been the custom since time immemorial.

We may then summarize by saying that their common store of notions about the past provides Ngoni with a means of distinguishing themselves from similar groups at a time when the cultural distinctions between these groups are in fact becoming less and less. In the courts, appeals to the value of traditional custom are made to gain acceptance for new rulings, while in ordinary life breaches of custom are widespread and are not censured.

When we consider legends associated with particular groups within the tribe the picture is rather different. Separate groups in the population remember, and sometimes act in the light of, particular incidents in the past which link them to other similar groups. Thus village A is linked with village B because of some incident in the past when the erstwhile leader of A captured the leader of B, or because at one time the leaders of A and B were brothers. These incidents, and the present inter-group relations with which they are associated, are not known universally but only by the groups concerned and by those near them. Yet in many ways these incidents are of greater practical significance than the more widely-known tribal history. The relationships to which they give rise, or rather such of those relationships as have persisted, are remembered at funerals, in the formal exchanges of beer, and in the settlement of quarrels. There are at first glance no sanctions to maintain relationships of this kind and indeed the very separate existence of two villages A and B may be due to a quarrel followed by a split. But although, for example, when an old woman dies in A there is no way of directly forcing a messenger to carry the news to B, there is in fact a great deal of social pressure on both groups to keep alive the connexion between them. This arises from the general responsibility placed on everyone to preserve the peace, that is, to preserve the existing social order intact. If there are quarrels in a village the headman is blamed by the chief for not controlling his people well.

All disputes are best settled out of court, even if they must be referred to court later on. Therefore a quarrel in village A brings to light all the alliances and cleavages which link A with other villages and differentiate it from them. The headman of A appeals to B for support, invoking the historical incident linking them, and hopes to settle affairs in his village with the authority of B's approval behind him. For if the headman of B is a potential ally he is also a potential rival, and the dissident section in A may themselves invoke their link with B and transfer their allegiance to him. Thus although the details of the relationship between A and B, and the historical incident connected with it, may not be widely known there is considerable external pressure on them to maintain their relationship. Connexions of this kind, mainly between villages but also between chiefdoms, play a large part in contemporary Ngoni life. Men walk twenty miles to a funeral and women carry pots of beer all day in response to ties of this kind.

Thus we see on the one hand that tribal legends are widely known, relate to pre-conquest times, and do not directly influence conduct; and on the other that legends associated with inter-group relations are known only by the groups concerned, may relate to either before or after 1898, and do directly influence action. Why is there this difference? We may regard the former legends as of significance mainly in external relations and the latter in internal. Within the tribe, and more particularly within the minor chiefdom, inter-group relations are still largely determined by Ngoni themselves, however much they may have altered in form and content since 1898 and however much Ngoni are part of a wider system. Movement between villages is only slightly controlled by the Administration; and in quarrelling, in marriage and adultery, beer-drinking, and hoeing, Ngoni men and women choose their own allies and enemies. Incidents in reality give rise to inter-group relations and are subsequently invoked to maintain them. History is written not in books but in the names of groups and in the remembered connexions between them, and as these connexions gradually change so local legendary history is gradually rewritten.

In external relations the Ngoni never act as a tribe except within the framework of European-controlled institutions. As yet no myth of origin is needed to explain the fact that Ngoni and Cewa representatives sit together on the Provincial Council save that the Administration put them there. The world of external relations is one of cultural heterogeneity and comparative adequate documentation. In this field legends have only a limited social function. They differentiate tribe X from tribe Y but do not relate them to each other.

Lastly we must consider Ngoni history proper. There have been many alleged accounts of Ngoni history published in Europe and South Africa, but these seem to have had little influence on the Fort Jameson Ngoni. Recently several histories have appeared in the vernacular and tribal history is now a subject taught in the primary schools. All these are based on the recollections of old Ngoni men and women more than on contemporary documents, of which there are very few.

We must therefore regard them as written legends rather than proper histories. Differences between one version and another are sometimes related to the different political affiliations of those providing the information.⁶ The period from 1821 to 1898 is treated in detail and the remaining fifty years dismissed in a few lines. It seems likely therefore that in time the tribal legend will be ossified, or that at least there will be one version widely known. Yet the vernacular texts are written in the school language (Nyanja) which is not yet the ordinary village speech (Nsenga), and are learned largely parrot-fashion, sometimes even with unintelligible words included. It remains to be seen how much of what is learnt under these conditions is carried over into life outside the classroom.

With the increasing documentation of modern life we might well hope that the period of legend alone will end and Ngoni history proper will begin. Unfortunately this is not so. Although it is fairly easy to find out from contemporary documents what went on in tribal affairs from 1890 to 1898, with the imposition of British rule a curtain descended. Official reports grew shorter and shorter with the years for there was less and less to record. Towards the end of the British South Africa Company's rule the published information on Ngoni life was little more than the annual statement, covering the whole of Northern Rhodesia, that 'the conduct of the natives has been satisfactory'. From the beginning of Colonial Office control in 1924 reports have lengthened, but these have dealt with the history not of the Ngoni tribe but of the Eastern Province and of Northern Rhodesia. These larger regions have become the significant units of government, not individual tribes and chiefdoms. The Fort Jameson Ngoni have become more and more closely integrated with the wider society and less and less have any history of their own. When the Ngoni were making history they lacked means to record it; now that means are available they have no history to record.

Thus we see that in this transitional society internal and external relations, as well as the level of technical skill, influence both the way in which people relate themselves to their past and also the timing and content of their written history.

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⁶ Read and Winterbottom have pointed out that informants from Northern Nyasaland assert that their Paramount Chief is the heir of Zwangendaba, while those from Fort Jameson say that their Chief is the heir. Cf. Read, 'Tradition and prestige', p. 467 and Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', p. 17.

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THE ROLE OF CATTLE AMONG THE PLATEAU TONGA OF MAZABUKA DISTRICT⁷

by

E. COLSON

THE Plateau Tonga are one of the few cattle-keeping peoples in Northern Rhodesia. They have had cattle for generations, but during the last half of the nineteenth century they lost much of their stock to Lozi and Ndebele armies which raided their territory. With the imp osition of peace after British administration was established, the Tonga again built up their herds, to some extent through acquisition of European breeds though a remnant of the old native cattle survived to add its strains to the present heterogeneous Tonga herds. In 1948, records of the Veterinary Department showed a total of 210,204 cattle in the sixteen chieftaincies of the Mazabuka District, or 2·3 cattle for every Tonga man, woman and child.⁸ Apparently the herds had almost doubled in the previous decade, since in 1938 Veterinary Departments estimates gave 148,485 native owned cattle for this district.⁹

The area of the district in 1948 was computed at 7,600 square miles, with an overall density of African population of 12 to the square mile. However, a large area adjacent to the railway, which cuts through the district, has been taken over for European farms and ranches, and the land available for the Africans and their cattle is

⁷ This paper is based on information gathered during September 1946—September 1947, and July 1948—July 1950, when I worked among the Plateau Tonga as a research officer of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. I worked mainly in four chieftaincies, Mwanga, Chona, Monze, and Mwanacingwala, and the material is most reliable for these four areas. I also visited, very briefly, Sianjalika, Ufwenuka, Siamaudu, and Chongo chieftaincies, and have talked with Tonga from every chieftaincy in the district. Thanks are due to my Tonga informants, to Benjamin Shipopa (my interpreter), and to the government officials who gave me information and assistance in my work. I re-wrote the manuscript in 1951, while a Simon Research Fellow at the University of Manchester. The first portion of the manuscript was read at a meeting of the Manchester Geographical Society, and it is to appear in the journal of that society.

⁸ Information supplied by the District Commissioner, Mazabuka. The Tonga population of the district was estimated as 89,535 in 1948. The number of cattle per head of population is probably high for Central Africa. Among the Fort Jameson Ngoni the figure is about 0·3 cattle per person. I am indebted to Mr. J. A. Barnes for this information.

⁹ *Veterinary Department, Annual Report for the year 1938.* Lusaka, Government Printer, 1939. This is an approximate figure and is the same as that quoted for 1936 and 1937. The district boundaries may have been altered during the decade so that the figures for 1938 and 1948 may not refer to exactly the same area.

much less than 7,600 square miles. The habitable portion available to them is still further reduced by arid unoccupied plains in Mapanza chieftaincy, the Kafue swamps, and the rugged country of the Zambezi Escarpment which lies along the eastern border.¹⁰ The average population density is probably closer to 58·2, though locally in Mwanacingwala chieftancy it rises to 137·7 per square mile.¹¹

As might be expected, the district shows signs of over-stocking with subsequent deterioration of stock and developing erosion of the land. In certain areas, over-stocking was apparent at least as early as 1936. In 1945 a team of agricultural experts who made a survey of Tonga land usage pointed out while degeneration of grazing lands was not as marked as was to be expected from the concentrations of stock involved, nevertheless, over-stocking was locally severe and in all parts of the district probably incipient. They estimated that in Mwanacingwala, Sianjalika, and Mwanza chieftaincies, and probably also in Ufwenuka and Chona, the cattle population was already twice the stock-carrying capacity of the land. Chongo chieftaincy in the west seemed to have adequate grazing for its herds, but a further increase in the herds would reduce it to the same level as the other chieftaincies.¹² Since 1945, the herds have continued to increase. Moreover, since the survey, the Tonga have lost the use of grazing on Crown Land and on unoccupied farms in the European belt which had eased the strain on their own pastures.¹³

The deterioration of the herds has not gone unnoticed. Some attempt has been made to improve the cattle by the introduction of good breeding stock. Government has distributed improved bulls. A few African farmers have bought good bulls from local European farmers, or occasionally have received them in gift from European friends.¹⁴ Good stock, however, is likely to die before the year is out due to the hardships of competing with native cattle for the over-crowded range.

The Administration is also aware of the problem of over-stocking and has begun to consider the advisability of enforcing a systematic culling of the herds to reduce the number of cattle to the stock-carrying capacity of the land. The Tonga themselves know that grazing is no

¹⁰ Information supplied by the District Commissioner, Mazabuka.

¹¹ W. Allan, M. Gluckman, D. Peters, C. Trapnell, *Land Holding and Land Usage among the Plateau Tonga of Mazabuka District*. p. 30. Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, No. 14. Published for the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute by the Oxford University Press. Cape Town, 1948. Henceforth referred to as *The Tonga Report*.

¹² Cf., *The Tonga Report*, pp. 121-30, 114-17.

¹³ From 1946 to 1950, farms were taken up at a rapid rate by new settlers. In some cases they found Tonga villages on their land. These were removed to the Native reserves.

¹⁴ Tonga practice is to keep only a few of the male calves for breeding purposes. A bull calf is chosen on the basis of its own appearance and the calving record of its mother. All other calves are castrated for use as oxen. Not every cattle owner keeps a bull, and there may be only one to a village.

longer adequate for their herds and that their cattle have deteriorated. They comment that 10 cows to-day give less milk than they got from 2 cows twenty or thirty years ago. They know that cows go dry quickly and that few families have milk from April to December. They say that their cows to-day rarely produce more than four calves before they are done bearing. They can see that the grazing has declined. They are quite capable of relating these facts and coming to much the same conclusion as the European observer. As one man put it, 'To-day there is little milk because there is no grass.' Yet this does not make them willing to reduce their herds or to look favourably on destocking.

In part this is due to their sense of grievance over the loss of land to the Europeans. They argue that their pastures are overgrazed because they have less land than formerly and disregard the problems raised by the increase in the herds. But their resistance to destocking is also affected by their system of cattle ownership and the use to which they put their cattle. Cattle do not mean the same thing to Europeans and to the Tonga, and any failure to understand this can only lead to difficulties.

Ownership of Cattle

Only a few head of cattle are publicly owned. A man who has offended some ritual taboo of his local community may be fined a head or two of cattle, and these are then held by his chief, headman, or ritual leader until they are needed for sacrifice on behalf of the community to end a drought or some other common misfortune. These cattle are dissipated again almost as soon as they are acquired and do not lead to the formation of large herds in public ownership. Another type of public ownership has developed in recent years as the Agricultural Department has purchased oxen for work in the gardens of certain approved schools. These are attached to the school and are supervised by the local teacher.

All other cattle can be said to be owned by individuals rather than by local or kinship groups. If you ask the Tonga about the ownership of a particular beast, they will always reply with the name of an individual, never with that of a group. Nevertheless, ownership does not have the same connotations of rights to independent action with respect to the property that it has to the European. The Tonga formulation would be: 'I own cattle. I belong to a kinship group. Therefore my kinsmen have the right to demand my assistance. My rights over my cattle are subject to the obligation which I have to assist my kinsmen.'

The Tonga distinguish between rights of ownership and rights to assistance. Rights of ownership apply to a particular beast or beasts; rights to assistance apply to a relationship between individuals. A man does not say, 'That cow belongs to my mother's brother and therefore it belongs to me.' He may say, 'That cow belongs to my mother's brother. My mother's brother should assist me and therefore I have the right to go to him and ask him to give me his cow if I

need it.' As a result, an individual is subject to the demands of his kin for cattle no matter how he has acquired his herd. He may have acquired cattle through his own efforts, or by taking bridewealth for his daughters or for women of his kin group, or by inheritance from members of his kin group, or by collecting damages from those who have injured him in some way. The source of the cattle is irrelevant to the right of assistance. Indeed, it would be considered bad form for a Tonga to go to a kinsman and say, ' You have taken cattle for my mother, or my sister, and therefore you should help me.' It suggests a *quid pro quo* transaction inimical to the general bonds of kinship. Moreover, when a man dies his cattle become the common inheritance of his kin group. Those which he acquired by his own efforts as well as those which he acquired through his kinship relations are part of this common estate. He has no right to will his property outside the group, nor can he designate his heir from amongst the members of the group.¹⁵ His kinsmen divide the cattle among themselves, however, and each man considers that the cattle he receives are now his individual property and not the property of the kin group.

To understand this system, it is necessary to pay some attention to the conditions under which it developed. It is only since the establishment of British administration that there has been a state organization which insures the safety of individual life and property. The Tonga had no chiefs, no public courts, no police system, no army. There were no public tribunals to which a man could appeal for justice. To maintain his rights, he was dependent upon the support of his kinsmen who would back him in an attempt to recover his property or to extort compensation for injury. They in return expected him to give them his support. The effective group of kin was a small number of individuals descended through females from a putative common ancestress. The genealogical links might be forgotten without affecting the validity of the claim to membership in the group.¹⁶ Henceforth I shall refer to such a group of kinsmen as a matrilineal group. The Tonga refer to it as *mukowa*, a word which is also used for clan, species or type. Its members were considered both by themselves and by outsiders to have common interests which set them off as a unit. Furthermore, outsiders held them collectively responsible for each other's actions. If a man from group A offended a man from group B, group B might retaliate against any member of A to square the account. Thus a man had a vital interest in helping his kinsman. If the account were not settled, he himself might pay for the offence. Equally, if he refused to help his kinsmen when they

¹⁵ For a discussion of the inheritance system of the Tonga, cf., E. Colson, 'Possible Repercussions of the Right to Make Wills upon the Plateau Tonga of Northern Rhodesia', *Journal of African Administration*, Vol. 2, No. 1, January, 1950.

¹⁶ For further discussion of the nature of the matrilineal group, cf., E. Colson, 'Social Organization of the Plateau Tonga,' in E. Colson and M. Gluckman, eds., *even Tribes of British Central Africa*. Published for the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute by the Oxford University Press. London, 1951.

were in trouble, they would refuse to help him when his turn came and might cast him out. He was then at the mercy of any outsider who wished to attack him. Or, to prevent possible involvement with other groups which he might offend, his own group might turn on him and either sell him into slavery or slay him. To deny the obligations of kinship was thus in a sense to outlaw oneself, since legal protection was dependent upon the support of the matrilineal group.

In such circumstances, the rights of ownership vested in the individual sink into the background. An individual had little incentive and less power to protect himself against acts by his matrilineal kin. If a kinsman took his cattle, he could get redress only if the majority of the group disapproved. Otherwise he was helpless. There was no outside authority to which he could turn to demand restitution.

With the institution of British administration about 1899, the necessity for the matrilineal group to stand united against the world began to disappear and the ties of kinship have weakened gradually as a result. Nevertheless, there still remains a strong sentiment attached to kinship and its obligations, which is in conflict with the growth of a desire for individual freedom both in action and in the use of property.

The introduction of courts and a police force not only freed a man from the need to rely upon his matrilineal group but also opened the way for him to sue his kinsmen and force them to restore his property or to pay him damages. To-day, if his relatives take his cattle without permission, he has legal redress in the courts where the act is defined as theft. Nevertheless, a man is still reluctant to enforce the legal rights given to him by the new system. In 1947, a woman living in Mwanza chieftancy brought suit against her matrilineal relatives for theft of a cow which they had been herding for her. After the initial hearing of the case, she withdrew the charge and decided to swallow her losses : 'They are my relatives and I can do nothing to regain my cattle.' It is said to be not uncommon for relatives even to-day to appropriate thus the cattle entrusted to them by the women of their group. Men also run this risk. In 1948, a young man, who was working as a government clerk in Lusaka, came home to bring suit against his mother's brother who had been herding his cattle. The mother's brother had used the cattle to settle an adultery suit of his own, and the young man demanded restitution. The Native Authority court which heard the case declared the matter a most difficult one. The counsellors admitted the legal rights of the nephew, but pointed out that he had a moral obligation to help his mother's brother. They finally succeeded in having the case transferred to another jurisdiction so that they need not pronounce a verdict.¹⁷

¹⁷ The plaintiff told me that he would not have acted against his mother's brother under ordinary circumstances, but he felt himself particularly aggrieved since it was his own sister with whom the mother's brother had committed adultery. This was incest and by his action his mother's brother had already denied their kinship.

When a man grows old, he may find that his cattle have been seized by relatives now that he is no longer strong enough to protect his cattle. They are undeterred by any thought that he might proceed against them in the courts. A wealthy farmer, rich in cattle, said one day that he hoped his favourite daughter would marry a good man who would look after him when he was old. I suggested that a son-in-law, no matter what his character, would be likely to offer asylum if only to have the use of the cattle. The man and the others listening laughed me down, 'Do you think that my matrilineal relatives would let me take the cattle with me? You can see for yourself—when a man grows old and has no strength, his matrilineal relatives come and steal his cattle and drive them to their own kraals. You can hear an old man shouting at them to bring back his cattle and grumbling about the theft, but he can do nothing and they take the cattle as they will until he has nothing left in his kraal. That was happening down here with the brother of Chifwebasweba. Before he died, they had already taken most of his cattle away from him.' Moreover, it is a common practice for a young man to steal a beast from his mother's brother to finance some enterprise of his own. Lads who run off to the labour centres of Southern Rhodesia or the Union of South Africa frequently finance their rail fares by the sale of a beast stolen from a matrilineal relative. Legally, to-day, the owner has the right to demand restitution, but usually he grumbles and threatens but does nothing. When the lad returns, his relative frequently kills a goat or a chicken in his honour and avoids all mention of the stolen animal. The offender feels no shame and may refer to the matter cheerfully, as a custom of the Tonga.

In a sense, the theft is considered to be only an anticipation of rights to inherit, for the moment the owner dies his property reverts to his matrilineal group and every member may claim a share.¹⁸

Despite the obligations to assist his kin and the restrictions on his right to dispose of his property after death, the Tonga owner still has the right to administer his cattle as he sees fit during his life-time. His matrilineal relatives have the right to complain if he refuses to help them; they do not have the right to interfere with his disposal of his property. If he wishes, he may sell his cattle and waste the proceeds. He may give cattle to his own children or even to those who are not related to him. He may kill his cattle for funerals, puberty ceremonies, or other ritual occasions. He may even slaughter them for food. He may send them away to be herded by other men. He should inform his matrilineal relatives of what he has done, but they cannot hinder him from his purpose save by persuasion or by threatening that since he has no care for his relatives they in turn will no longer consider him a member of their group or eligible for assistance. If feelings grow

¹⁸ The matrilineal group of the dead man's father also has a claim on his inheritance. His own children usually are given one beast for their joint inheritance, though occasionally they receive more. To-day the children could probably establish a legal claim to this beast which would be upheld by the courts.

violent, a man will suspect his relatives of attempting to bewitch him and will attribute his misfortunes to their efforts, and this fear of witchcraft may strengthen the purely moral sanctions which lead a man to administer his herd in the interests of his matrilineal group.

A further proof that the Tonga system is based on individual ownership rather than on joint-ownership is the fact that women and children have the same right as men to own cattle, though they exercise it less frequently.

A boy is sometimes presented with a beast or two by his father or some other relative. The original gift plus any increase then belong to the child who exercises the same rights that an adult man does over his property. He must be consulted before his cattle are sold, traded, or killed, and could insist upon his right to dispose of them as he sees fit. Usually he sends his herd to his matrilineal relatives, however, lest his father should die and his father's heirs declare that they belong to his father's herd. If he dies, his matrilineal relatives will probably claim his property as their inheritance. However, only an adult may claim the right to share in inheritance and in the distribution of bridewealth, and therefore a child has not this means of gaining cattle.

Women receive cattle from a number of sources. Occasionally they inherit cattle from their matrilineal relatives, although unless the herd is large and the number of relatives small they are passed over in the division of the inheritance. I have recorded only two cases where women have accepted bridewealth in respect of their daughters. Bridewealth cattle are therefore not a source of their wealth. More frequently they purchase cattle with money received as a gift or derived from the sale of beer or some crop. In the western chieftaincies, women are more likely to have large herds and some are counted as *baami* (wealthy people). In that area, a wealthy man may give cattle to his daughter on her marriage. She is then the owner of these cattle and has the right to use them as she will to assist herself and her children. This is an important source. Sometimes a man gives a present of cattle to his wife. In the western areas, a man may present a beast or two to a wife who has brought him cattle through her adulteries, in appreciation of the role she has played in the increase of his herd.¹⁹ If he should later change his mind and try to recover the gift, the women and her relatives would repudiate any claims to ownership that the husband might put forward. In the eastern areas, the Tonga deny that a husband would encourage his wife by giving her cattle paid for her adulteries.

Among the eastern Tonga, women generally claim that they do not own cattle. When I have asked a woman if she planned to use money she possessed to purchase cattle, the usual answer has been: 'I am a woman. What have I to do with cattle?' They also say that if men should hear them boasting of owning cattle they would be angry. Nevertheless, while ownership does not seem as common as in the west,

¹⁹ The standard rate of damages paid by lover to husband is to-day 2 cattle or £4.

some woman do own small herds. At Chona village, no woman admitted to owning cattle. At Chepa village, among wealthier maize producers, six women admitted that they had cattle. One woman had inherited five from her full brother and had received another cow as a gift from her paternal half-brother. She increased her herd by the purchase of five cattle using money derived from the sale of her bean crop. Another woman built up a small herd from the increase of one cow originally presented to her by her father. The rest had received their cattle from various relatives. In a neighbouring village, the wife of the headman owned a number of ploughing oxen and several cows. Her husband originally gave her a share of the money made by the sale of maize which both had worked to produce. She purchased a cow and the herd came from the increase. In still another village a woman given money by her husband after the sale of their crop used her share to purchase a cow from her husband so that she might have cattle of her own. Among these people of the eastern chieftaincies, however, it is not common for cattle to be given to a woman on her marriage. If she does receive the use of cattle, the beasts usually are considered to represent a herding loan and not an outright gift. When the giver dies, his matrilineal relatives may claim the right to resume control of the cattle if they know of the transaction. Thus a woman in Ufwenuka chieftancy who received five cattle from her father and one from her father's brother hid the herd with her matrilineal relatives in anticipation of the demands which are likely to arise on her father's death.

In all areas, such cattle as a woman owns are her property, and her husband and children have no legal control over them. She must depend upon men to herd her cattle for her, and this presumably made her rights to cattle still less secure than those of a man in earlier times; but to-day the courts make her secure in her possession.

The consideration of the system of cattle ownership indicates that an individual has the right under Tonga custom to dispose of his cattle, and therefore to cull his herds. His obligations to his kindred, however, require that in disposing of his herd he keep in mind his duty to assist his kindred with cattle to pay bridewealth or to pay damages if they are involved in difficulties. His independence of action is reduced hereby, especially if he wishes to be regarded as a respectable member of his community.

The Herding System

A further complication of the property system lies in the fact that although cattle are always owned by individuals, it is often difficult to establish the legal owner of a particular beast and usually quite impossible to discover how many cattle a particular man owns.

There are no adequate figures to indicate the spread of ownership among the population.²⁰ I would say as a guess that there are a few men

²⁰ The best indications, based on small samples, are contained in Table XXXVIII and Appendix II of the *Tonga Report*.

who own several hundred head, many more who own from twenty to one hundred, still more who own less than twenty, and a few who own none at all; but that is as far as I would care to commit myself.

The Veterinary Department provides a break-down of the figure for total cattle population into number of head resident in each chieftaincy of Mazabuka District. In 1948, the cattle were distributed as follows:²¹

CATTLE POPULATION BY CHIEFTAINCY

CATTLE

Chiefs Areas	Male	Female	Total
Naluama	2,788	3,743	6,531
Mwenda	4,390	5,044	9,434
Sianjalika	6,670	8,279	14,949
Mwanacingwala	8,153	10,493	18,646
Chongo	8,735	10,721	19,456
Simuyobe	10,720	14,620	25,340
Monze	10,145	13,252	23,397
Mwansa	5,200	6,827	12,027
Chona	2,119	2,779	4,898
Ufwenuka	5,273	6,733	12,006
Siamaudu	8,308	10,185	18,493
Moyo	2,566	3,018	5,584
Mapanza	7,944	10,705	18,649
Macha	1,257	1,594	2,851
Singani	6,932	10,786	17,718
Siabunkulu	127	98	225
Totals	91,327	118,877	210,204

These figures, however, show only the number of cattle counted in each chieftaincy and do not show the number of cattle owned by the people resident in each chieftaincy. That is a very different matter.

I made a number of attempts to question informants about the number of cattle they owned and how they had obtained these, but abandoned the questioning as useless when even those who were usually co-operative and eager to help my work squirmed, denied, claimed to have forgotten and did everything in their power to be obstructive. They all denied any ritual taboo on counting cattle or announcing the number owned, but it was evident that on this subject I was up against one of the most deep-rooted antipathies that the Tonga have. They are opposed to letting anyone, friend or foe or relative, know just how many cattle they have, or where the cattle are, or indeed how they were come by.²² An inspection of the cattle kraals will do

²¹ Information supplied by the District Commissioner, Mazabuka.

²² In this they differ markedly from the neighbouring Ilia of the Namwala District, who are said to boast publicly of the number of their cattle.

little to clear up the matter since a cattle owner rarely has all his stock in his own kraal, and some of the beasts in his kraal will undoubtedly belong to other men and women. This is due to the herding system.²³

It is very common for Tonga to enter into herding arrangements. A man will send a beast or two to some friend or relative. If he owns a large number of cattle, he may have the greater number of his cattle herded by various clients. Even a small owner will probably have one or two head herded by someone else. In return, he receives cattle to herd for others. It is not a reciprocal arrangement whereby two men exchange cattle, but a system of wide ramifications. A sends cattle to B, who probably in turn has cattle being herded by C, D and E, and A meanwhile is receiving cattle from F and G. Herding links follow ties of kinship and friendship and reinforce these ties. They extend over considerable distances without regard to the boundaries of neighbourhoods or chieftaincies.

The actual owners of a portion of the cattle herded in any one chieftaincy may live outside its boundaries or even outside the district. Men who live in the Gwembe District, along the Zambezi where cattle do not thrive because of tsetse fly, may own cattle which are herded for them by men who live on the fly-free plateau of Mazabuka District. Thus cattle herded in Mwanza chieftaincy may be owned by a man living in Chipepo Chieftaincy a good three or four days walk away. In turn men living in Mwanza chieftaincy have some of their cattle herded elsewhere. One man had cattle in Munyumbwe Chieftaincy, a two days' trip by bicycle from his home, and other cattle in Sianjalika, Chona, Ufwenuka, Chongo, and Monze chieftaincies, as well as a number herded by men living in Mwanza. A man questioned in Chona chieftaincy had cattle in Ufwenuka, Chona, and Mwanza chieftaincies, and was herding cattle for a relative living in Mwanza.

The herding arrangements may have started in the old dangerous days when it was better to split the cattle into small lots in different areas rather than run the risk that a raid against one kraal would destroy a man's whole herd. It also lessened the risks in case of cattle epidemics. It may be one of the reasons for the rapid spread of cattle throughout Tonga country again once the raids were over, since the raided areas could draw replacements from those areas which had escaped relatively lightly. In 1913 it was considered to be an ancient custom, and Tonga leaders informed government officials : 'It would not be possible to tell you how many cattle we have because no man keeps all his cattle in his own village. He herds the cattle

²³ Some similar type of herding system seems to be very common among cattle-keeping tribes throughout Africa. The *Ila* seem to have it. Cf., Edwin Smith and A. Dale, *The Ila-Speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*. Vol. I, p. 386. London, Macmillan, 1920. It also occurs in South and East Africa. Cf., e.g., J. G. Peristiany, *The Social Institutions of the Kipsigis*. pp. 150-2. London, George Routledge and Sons, 1939. I Schapera, ed., *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 201. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1937.

of others and others herd his cattle : it is our custom of long standing. But we have many.²⁴

In the Tonga area where land was once plentiful and rights in land did not vest in any corporate group or authority, the existence of herding ties probably played their part in giving cohesion to Tonga society. A man rewarded his kinsmen by giving them cattle to herd ; he attempted to bind others to him by the same method. In return he showed his friendship to them by caring for their cattle. To-day the herding system still plays its part in maintaining bonds between people who often live in distant areas and see each other seldom. It is also a means of balancing the obligations of the individual to assist his kin against his desire to retain his property. The greater his visible wealth the greater the demands made upon him by his kinsmen. The herding system prevents his relatives from being aware of the extent of his wealth, which may help to reduce their demands for assistance. It also serves to hide a portion of his assets from his creditors and those who have a claim against him for damages. It is significant that when a man is ordered to pay cattle by the courts to-day, or when a relative begs for help in cattle, the usual reply is : 'I will try to find a beast.' A man does not admit that he has cattle in his kraal and has only to go and get them. He maintains that he will seek for cattle, but they will be difficult to find. When he is reminded that he has cattle in his kraal, he refers to other men as their owners and pleads his own poverty. Thus he delays and is sometimes able to evade the obligation. Moreover, others will be less likely to resort to self-help and drive off the cattle they regard as due them since they will not know which are his own cattle and which he is herding for others.

Herding arrangements have also a practical utility for those who participate. Men who have no cattle or not enough for their purposes are able to get possession of the necessary animals through the herding system. Large owners who have too many cattle for their own comfort find it a way to hold a maximum of stock with a minimum of hired helpers who require supervision. The large owner relies upon the boys of his own immediate family with one or two additional youths whom he has been able to attract to his service for the care of the herd which he keeps at his own kraal and utilizes the herding system to care for the remainder of his stock. The scattering of his cattle into other areas also relieves the pressure upon the pastures and waterholes close to his kraal. The few cattle that he receives from other men do not balance the outflow from his own herd.

A herding arrangement may begin in a variety of ways. A man who needs ploughing oxen or cows for milk may approach a wealthier friend or relative and beg for cattle to help him. He may receive a beast or two, and if the arrangement proves satisfactory it may continue for years and even survive the death of the original parties to the

²⁴ Quoted from a report by the Secretary for Native Affairs written in 1913.

agreement. Sometimes a man who has cattle seeks someone to herd them for him. A man who receives a share in the bridewealth of his daughters may pass on the cattle to other relatives. Sometimes he transfers his rights of ownership to the relative; sometimes he merely transfers custody. Once it was believed that a man became sterile if he drank milk from cattle given as bridewealth for his uterine sisters, and a father protected his sons from this catastrophe by sending the cattle elsewhere to be herded. Though the belief has largely vanished, the practice continues. In the eastern areas, when a man receives cattle of adultery from the lover of his wife, he usually seeks someone to herd them. The eastern Tonga do not look with approval on a wife's adulteries, and they despise the western Tonga for considering cattle of adultery as a way to wealth. They maintain that the husband should feel ashamed to drink the milk from such cattle, though it is not taboo to him, but still more important, they think, is the necessity to keep these cattle away from the wife lest she point to them as the source of her husband's wealth. They say that a woman is apt to sneer at a reminder of her sins if she sees cattle which she has brought through her adulteries leading to the increase of her husband's herd. It is best, therefore, to place the cattle where she cannot see them and be reminded of their origin, and where she will not know how they increase or if her husband sells one of the beasts.

When a man grows old and has no young sons or other dependents who will herd for him, he must send his cattle away to be herded by others or lose them entirely. Even young men will make herding arrangements from time to time when the need presses. If a man receives cattle in payment of debt, bridewealth, or damages during the dry season, he will arrange either to have them herded by the original owner or by someone in the immediate vicinity, since it is useless to take cattle to a new home before the beginning of the rains has freshened the pastures; for the cattle will return to their familiar grazing grounds or go straying through the bush in search of pasture. The present day veterinary rules may also make it necessary to resort to a herding arrangement, for frequently a quarantine is imposed against the movement of cattle from one chieftaincy to another to prevent the spread of cattle disease. At such times a man who obtains cattle in another chieftaincy, or who wishes to move from his chieftaincy, must leave the cattle at their original home until the quarantine is lifted. A certain amount of surreptitious movement does take place across quarantine lines, but the Native Authorities are likely to take a severe view if the matter comes to light, and the owner will receive a heavy fine. In any of these situations, if the owner has no immediate need of his cattle and the arrangement proves satisfactory to both parties, a temporary herding arrangement may continue in force for many years.

The herding system is further complicated since the original herder may in turn transfer the beast further. Thus Sulwe of Shanamoonga

Village in Chona Chieftaincy received cattle to herd from a distant relative living in Ufwenuka chieftaincy. Sulwe has no kraal of his own and therefore placed the cattle in charge of his sister's son who keeps them in the kraal of the older man with whom he lives, Sulwe's paternal half-brother. They live in another section of the village, perhaps a mile from Sulwe's homestead. If anything happens to the cattle, the sister's son must answer to Sulwe who in turn is responsible to the owner. The owner of the kraal is not directly involved in the transaction. Matters may be complicated still further, for the beasts being herded may have some claim against them. If they were given originally as bridewealth, the relatives of the man who paid bridewealth have a prior claim against the cattle should the woman for whom they paid abscond. The identical beasts need not be repaid, but there is a claim against the cattle owned by the man who received the bride-wealth. Frequently when suit is brought in a Native Authority court, the argument involves owner, claimant, primary herder, and secondary herder.

Recognized rights and obligations regulate the herding system. The owner does not pay the herder for his care of the cattle. The herder has his repayment in the use of milk from the cows and in the use of the oxen in ploughing. If a beast dies, he usually receives the major portion of the meat. He also has the manure for his fields if he wishes to use it. But the increase of the cattle as well as the original beasts remain the property of the original owner. The herder is responsible for the cattle while they are in his care and for any damage they may cause. If the cattle raid a field, the herder may be made to pay the whole of the damages awarded, though occasionally an owner will pay a share proportionate to the number of his cattle involved in the raid. The herder is not liable for accidental deaths to the cattle in his charge, even should these be caused by the carelessness of his herdsboys, but if he deliberately kills a beast or disposes of one in any way, he must repay the owner. If the two men are in a kinship relationship or are close friends, the owner may present the herder with an occasional beast from the increase of the cattle or permit him to kill a beast for some ritual occasion. He is not obliged to do this. If the herder should use a beast without the owner's permission, he is liable to be sued for damages even though the two men are relatives. He remains responsible for the cattle until he returns them to their owner or until he produces evidence that they have died in his hands. In the latter case, he should take the skins to the owner and explain the manner of the deaths to prove that he is not at fault.

Despite these safeguards, owners claim that they are always at a disadvantage in a herding arrangement : 'If you send your cattle to be herded, when a beast dies in the herd it is always one that belongs to you and never one owned by the herder. Never were so few calves born to a cow save one that is being herded. To give out to herd is to give indeed.' It may be true that herders succeed in acquiring a

certain number of the calves born to the beasts in their care, and that they deceive the owners about the number of cattle that die, and this is particularly likely to happen when herder and owner live far apart and may not see each other for several years. Nevertheless, the legal position is clear. No matter how long the arrangement may continue, the owner has always the right to resume his cattle including their increase. If the cattle increase in the herder's hands, the owner may take some of the progeny and hand them on to another herder.

Eventually, a large owner will have cattle being herded away which have never been in his own kraal and his heirs, indeed, may have little knowledge of the ramifications of his ownership. On his death, his matrilineal group will assemble to discuss his property and attempt to trace the cattle that have disappeared into the herding arrangements. Where a member of the group itself has cattle, he will probably be allowed to retain possession as his portion of the inheritance and they then become his own property. Where an outsider is concerned, the cattle are usually called in to be divided out again amongst the heirs. Occasionally the group may continue the herding arrangement with the chief heir in the position of the original owner. If the herder dies, the owner usually recalls his cattle. Occasionally he allows the herder's heirs to appoint another in his place, and again the arrangement continues as before. In either case, the link that binds herder and owner is emphasized at the funeral when the surviving partner brings one of his own cattle to kill in honour of the dead, which should then in turn be replaced by another beast from the dead man's herd. Cattle links, like kinship links, are respected by the Tonga.

The perpetuation of the herding system is possible only in a situation such as is found among the Tonga where people are interested in ownership of cattle rather than in immediate possession. Once a man has satisfied his immediate needs for ploughing oxen and for cows for milk, he is free to use his cattle to build up, or enhance, his links with other men and thereby his influence. He retains his rights of ownership so that he may draw upon these cattle if need arises. The fact that he may lose economically through embezzlement by the herder is in this system of minor importance. This contention is supported by the behaviour of the Tonga in another though somewhat comparable situation. When a man has been awarded cattle by a court or by arbitration between the matrilineal groups concerned, he is often in no hurry to put himself in possession of the cattle. He knows that when he does make his demand that he will be able to enforce his claim, and so he is content to let the years pass with occasional trips to remind the other man that he still owes the debt. The Tonga are eager to establish a claim to cattle but are prepared to let the claim lie dormant for long periods of years. The claim remains good, and can be inherited, so long as there are witnesses either to the original transaction or to the subsequent acknowledgement of the claim. In such cases, the claimant loses the increase from the cattle awarded to him, but

only in very recent years have men begun to claim that they should receive more cattle for a long unpaid claim. The courts have yet to come to any clear decision on the point, but it is an indication that the Tonga are beginning to think of their herds in terms of economic transactions rather than as the material means of building up a network of social ties.

It is obvious that the herding system will lie in the way of a thorough culling of the herds which a policy of de-stocking would require. A man may always take refuge from a demand that he dispose of particular animals by declaring that they are herding cattle and not his own property, and this very often may be true. If an official suggests that a given beast be slaughtered, the owner may live some days away and the herder has no right to sell or slaughter an animal on his own initiative without the owner's permission. The owner, while he has a right to dispose of the animal as he pleases, would probably hesitate to deprive the herder of his charge unless he himself felt the pressure of necessity, either to meet some obligation or to exchange for food in times of starvation. Equally, since the owner has no immediate benefit from some of his cattle—perhaps the larger portion of his herd in the case of a large owner—he has less incentive to seek to improve quality. A cow that gives more milk will not help him since the herder will drink the milk. Better oxen will benefit the herder rather than the owner. A reduction of the cattle, even though he now has better quality stock, may mean that he must retrench on the number of his herding arrangements, and thus lead to a diminishing of his influence.

On the other hand, the system ensures a more uniform distribution of cattle among the population. Probably many families have milk cows and enough oxen for ploughing because of the herding system. It may also disguise the concentration of cattle in the hands of the wealthier men and make the Tonga less conscious of any possibility that the wealthy may own more cattle than the land can carry.

Use of Cattle

It is obvious that until recent years the Tonga desire for cattle was not conditioned entirely by the practical benefits derived from their possession. Forty years ago, little or nothing was done to turn them into what the European would regard as an economic asset. The Tonga milked their cows to provide sour milk for food and butter for use as an unguent; they ate the meat of those beasts that died or were killed for ritual purposes. They used cattle hides for mats and cut the hides into thongs for ropes. But such utility did not determine the importance of their cattle to the Tonga, and the Tonga did not examine stock in terms of ability to meet these practical ends. They admire and extol cattle for beauty of form, strength and size, and cows for their reproductive records. I have yet to hear them comment on milk records or beef production as criteria affecting their judgments of

particular beasts, though they have begun to appraise them in terms of their market price.

By the older Tonga, at least, cattle are valued for quite different reasons. They are important in a social context and in the ritual that dramatizes social ties. In earlier times this was their chief role. In the western chieftaincies which seem to have escaped the full brunt of the raids and where cattle have always been most numerous, cattle were used for bridewealth as an important element in the series of transactions which created a new family group. They were killed to celebrate the emergence of a girl from her puberty seclusion and her entry into the status of a marriageable woman. They were killed during the mourning for the death of mature members of the community, and the number killed varied with the importance of the dead to the community. Occasionally cattle were killed at the rain shrines when the community mobilized to ward off a common disaster, such as drought or pestilence. They were transferred between individuals and groups to nullify hostile acts such as adultery, theft, bodily injury, and murder which threatened the good relations between the groups. In the latter case, in default of cattle, slaves or even full members of the offending group were substituted. Cattle were also used to bind people together in herding arrangements. In the eastern areas, where the raids left few cattle, goats and chickens were used for much the same purposes.

Tonga still visualize the importance of cattle as arising from their use in these situations. If you ask a Tonga why he wants cattle, he is likely to reply, 'They are a good thing to have. They help you if you are in trouble.' To some extent their importance in these social contexts has even increased in recent years. The outlawing of feuds and the institution of courts and police have made it unnecessary for individuals to rely upon their matrilineal groups for physical support. To-day it is their mutual right to inherit each other's cattle and other property and to receive assistance in paying bridewealth and damages which checks the breakdown of the matrilineal groups. To a large extent, the Tonga have used their increased herds to further their customary interests. The number of cattle passed in bridewealth and in payment of damages and the number slaughtered for ritual occasions have increased steadily with the increase in the herds. This is especially noticeable in the eastern chieftaincies. In 1900, cattle were rarely included in bridewealth. To-day, four cattle are commonly included in the payments. In 1900, the emergence of a girl from her puberty seclusion called for the killing of a goat or chicken. To-day the occasion is celebrated commonly with the killing of two head of cattle. Some people have begun to slaughter a beast or two for a wedding. In 1900, the funeral of an important man might be honoured by the slaughter of five to six cattle. To-day twenty five cattle may be killed during the mourning for a headman to feed the crowds who come to mourn, and the funeral of even a small child

may see the slaughter of one or two head.²⁵ Probably to-day several thousand head are slaughtered annually for funerals, weddings, and puberty ceremonies. This allows for a small scale culling of the herds. Good stock was killed until a few years ago when the Native Authorities began to enforce a rule that a permit is required before breeding stock or working oxen may be killed. While the rule is occasionally ignored, most people go to a good deal of trouble to obtain a suitable animal : an old or barren cow, an ox incapacitated by blindness or some other physical defect. They trade good stock for useless animals, or purchase them with money—a development, incidentally, which makes a man value animals which he otherwise might be prepared to slaughter.

The value attached to cattle because of their role in social life has not been untouched by the various developments which have Christianized some Tonga, educated more, and led most of them to exploit their soils and their proximity to the railway by developing as cash crop farmers. Indeed, the old men say that the overstocking problem will solve itself on their deaths since the young people are interested only in money which they can turn immediately into goods such as clothing, gramophones, bicycles, beer, tobacco, and food. 'They are fools and will never get cattle the way we have done.' Young men rather agree : 'We young men have money, but the old men have cattle. To-day cattle are too dear for us to buy. If we can buy eight oxen for ploughing, then we are content and think we have done well.' But I noticed that when I asked even the more sophisticated young people to name the wealthy Tonga that they replied first with the names of the big cattle owners and only later did they think of wealthy farmers who sold large quantities of maize but had few save working cattle.

Their attitude, and to some extent that of their elders, is conditioned by developments which have increased the importance of cattle in Tonga economic life. It would be a mistake to look only at the social value of cattle and to forget the development of this new aspect of Tonga life. The European missionaries and farmers who settled in the district early in this century taught the Tonga the use of oxen in drawing the plough. In the decade between 1910 and 1920, many changed from axe and hoe cultivation to plough cultivation, and to-day almost every Tonga depends upon plough and oxen for planting his

²⁵ The eastern Tonga say they kill cattle at funerals to feed the mourners and that traditionally those who came to mourn had the right to seize and kill any small stock they saw about the homestead to satisfy their craving for meat. They might continue the mourning until everything had been consumed. Children were forbidden to eat funeral meat, but otherwise there was no restriction on its use. To-day even this rule has faded. In the western districts, some of the cattle slaughtered were not used to feed the mourners and the meat was allowed to rot. I was told at Mwanacingwala that this was formerly their custom and that they had begun to eat funeral meat to cater to the European's peculiar ideas that one should not waste cattle without recompense. In both areas to-day, mourners eat their fill at a funeral and at a big funeral they may return home laden with fresh meat which they proceed to cook at home for general consumption.

op. About 1920, they began to use oxen in transport, first to drag the rough home-made sledges which they learned to fashion and which were still important items of equipment, and then to draw the scotch carts and wagons which wealthier men were able to purchase. They are dependent still upon ox transport to carry their maize to the buying stations and to some extent to transport goods from the trading stores back to their villages. Possibly for this reason oxen to-day are valued more highly than cows. Young men who are beginning to build up their own herds usually begin with oxen, and only after they have sufficient oxen—from four to eight—do they consider the possibility of buying cows.²⁶

Manure from the herds has also become important. Until recent years, abandoned kraal sites were planted to tobacco. To-day in many areas, the more progressive men cart manure to their fields in an attempt to maintain the fertility of their soil. This gives new emphasis to the desire of each man to have his own herd and his own kraal, where his rights to manure will be unquestioned. In some areas, those who are not interested in transferring manure to their fields may still be interested in its possession since they can sell their kraal sites to more progressive men.

The existence of a market for cattle must also be considered. Most Tonga feel that cattle should not be sold unless there is some urgent need for cash. During the famine of 1950, many people sold cattle to finance the purchase of food or traded their cattle for maize to those areas fortunate enough to have a surplus. Other men, however, turn their cattle into cash to finance business ventures. In January 1950, a man who sells chickens to the markets in the Copper Belt of Northern Rhodesia, sold his ox for £7 10s. because he needed money to buy chickens for shipment and his middleman was late in forwarding money for previous shipments. Others have sold cattle to pay for moughs, cultivators, scotch carts, or bicycles. The general sentiment to-day favours these transactions, though someone who sold his cattle to buy beer, clothes and food from the trading stores would be despised as worthless. I remember at a funeral listening to a group of men commenting freely upon their host and the dissipation of the cattle which he had inherited from his mother's brother: 'He bought beer and chickens. He drank up all the money he didn't spend on chickens and other things to eat. He wanted to eat chicken all the time. And he killed the goats one after the other and ate only a bit and then killed another. He bought everything he wanted from the store: clothes, shoes, sugar, tea, bread, and everything like that. If anyone came along and asked him for money, he reached in his pocket and pulled out 2s. 6d. and gave it to him. Oh, he was a big man for

²⁶ In the eastern chieftaincies, every ox is broken to the plough. Men with any cattle wait until an ox is two years old before beginning to use it. Those with few cattle may put a yearling ox to the plough. It is possible that in Simuyobe and Mwanacingwala only a few are broken for this purpose and the rest are kept to gladden their owner's eyes, as among the Ila.

a time!' Their contempt could only be matched by that of a real New Englander for a man who lives on capital.

Nevertheless, men have begun to consider cattle as property to be transferred for cash with which to obtain the many new requirements they now have.

The demand for cattle at the moment appears to be unlimited, and over the past decade prices have increased steadily, or sometimes by leaps and bounds. The Tonga say that only a few years ago they got 10s. to 20s. for a good ox, and that to-day a similar animal may fetch £7 or £8. They can get more money to-day for the scrubbiest scrub animal that they could a few years ago for a fine beast in good condition. Cattle therefore are regarded as a good investment in which one may more than double one's money with any luck. Even a bull calf which has just been weaned brought £3 in 1950, while a yearling ox might sell for £4. A cow of corresponding age might sell for 5s. to 10s. less. Most people, however, avoid selling young stock, if they can, and sell their old or defective animals.

The Tonga are eager to buy from each other, either to build up their own herds, or for re-sale to European buyers on the railway line, or to slaughter themselves. The competition between Europeans and Tonga probably plays its part in keeping up the price of stock, and as the Tonga have received more and more money with the increased price of their maize in recent years they have had the cash to develop considerable internal trade in cattle. European dealers find it worth their while to send African buyers through the reserves to search out cattle for them. The Tonga also drive cattle in to the hamlets on the railway line. In 1948, 4,563 head of stock were purchased in the reserves under permit by European cattle buyers, local butcheries and farmers.²⁷

There are no African butcheries in the reserves as yet. Nonetheless the Tonga have begun to compete with European buyers for slaughter cattle. This applies particularly close to the railway line where the people are most sophisticated. Men buy up old stock which they slaughter. They trade the meat for maize and then dispose of the maize at a profit at the buying stations. Men also convert their own stock into cash in this way when an animal is old or for some other reason has become useless. Even a portion of the meat killed for a puberty ceremony or a funeral may find its way into the market if the owner decided that a whole animal is too much to sacrifice to his social obligations. It is therefore quite possible to-day for a man to invest in cattle, get the full value from the beast in the form of work or calves, and then recoup himself for more than his original investment by slaughtering the animal when it can work no more and selling the meat.²⁸

²⁷ Information supplied by the District Commissioner, Mazabuka.

²⁸ Hides are also sold to European buyers, and give a small but welcome cash income. Formerly when cattle were killed for ritual purposes, the hides were usually cut up with the meat. To-day the hides are removed and sold. Hide buyers make a point of attending funerals and puberty ceremonies to obtain the green hides which sell for more than dry ones. There is also a very small trade to-day in milk.

Progressive Tonga are well aware of these possibilities, and consider cattle a good investment for their spare funds. I have heard young men insist in court that they want damages in cattle rather than money: 'If he gives me money, I may only gamble it away. If he gives me cattle, then I shall have something to help me.' Young men have pointed out to me that banks and postal savings accounts pay only an infinitesimal return each year on deposits.²⁹ They argue that if they place £5 in a postal savings account, they receive in return a few pence on their investment. If they use the same money to buy a cow, with a calf they should have a calf which can be sold for £2 or more. If the cow dies, they may still be able to sell the meat for sufficient to cover their original investment. Men away at work, including teachers and government clerks, send money to relatives for investment in cattle, saying that it is the best investment known to them despite the chance that the cattle may die or the relative embezzle a part of the herd entrusted to him.

All sections of the community are likely therefore to offer strenuous objections to any suggestion of de-stocking. Cattle have retained their ritual and social importance over the years, and at the same time have received a greatly increased economic importance, which is most evident to the progressive elements in the community who have least appreciation for the role of cattle in ritual. Most Tonga, however, probably value their cattle for both reasons—with an emotional response to the social aspect which is incomprehensible to the European and at the same time with a cupidity born of their economic value which is only too understandable.

Grazing Laws

Customary rules concerning land ownership and land usage are also hostile to the growth of an appreciation of the need for de-stocking. So far, we have paid no attention to ownership of pastures or to organization to control the use of grazing. These are matters which have not concerned the Tonga until recent years, and which to-day concern them only because of pressure from the Veterinary and Agricultural Departments. Traditionally all land was open to grazing, except when it bore crops, and grazing was free to anyone who needed it.

It was not restricted to members of a village or a neighbourhood or a chieftaincy. Men naturally tried to graze their herds as close to their own homes as was feasible, but they were not prevented by any customary law from going further afield. No organization existed which could restrict the movement of cattle or limit the numbers grazing on a given area. This is still largely true to-day.

As a result, it is possible to let the cattle roam freely once the crops have been harvested and they can do no further damage to the crops. During the dry season, cattle are left to roam as they will through the fields and the bush. No attempt is made to bring them back to the

²⁹ A few Tonga do have postal savings accounts.

kraals at night, and many of them stray far from their home pastures, especially in a dry year or in a year when the regulations against burning the bush have been evaded and the pastures near the village have been burned bare. Even the cows are left to roam, for only during the rains is there sufficient milk to warrant milking, and the rest of the year there is no need to bring them to the kraals. Just before the rains begin, the owners begin their search for strayed beasts, which may take them far afield. Each man is responsible for tracing his own cattle, unaided by others.

The Tonga do not have the cattle law of the southern Bantu which holds the inhabitants of a homestead responsible for strayed animals whose tracks can be traced to the homestead but not beyond. Instead, it lies to the owner to prove that his cattle are in a given kraal, which is not always an easy matter. If he asks too diligently about the whereabouts of a strayed animal, the man questioned may decide that he is being accused of theft and sue the owner for slander. Those who may have seen a straying animal are not eager to suggest its possible whereabouts, since if their word is produced as evidence they too may find themselves involved in the suit. Recently the Native Authorities have ordered that strayed animals should be brought to the chief and held in his kraal until claimed by their owners, but this rule is often evaded and the owner must still seek far for his cattle.³⁰ But complicated as this may make the life of the cattle owner, from one point of view the most serious problem is the loss of time spent in searching for the animals and the possibility that the owner will not be able to take advantage of the ploughing rains because he has yet to locate his cattle. Moreover, strayed animals are often found in poor condition and quite unable to do the heavy work of ploughing.

In areas which are short of grazing and water during the dry season, the residents take advantage of the right to graze their cattle anywhere in Tonga country to drive their cattle to more fortunate areas. This seems to have been very general in the past. In the eastern chieftaincies, the people of the Escarpment country brought their cattle westward to the Magoye River for water and pasture without protest from villages located along the Magoye. To-day, however, the Government has built dams in many parts of the country and the old custom of sending cattle to dry season camps has disappeared in the east. It still continues in the western chieftaincies. Cattle camps are built along the Kafue by the people of Simuyobe, Mwanacingwala, and

³⁰ Identification of strayed stock is the more difficult since the Tonga have yet to adopt a system of adequate identifying marks. All the cattle of a chieftaincy are branded with a mark identifying them as a resident in that chieftaincy. This is done by the Veterinary Department. A few individuals have their own brands, and have purchased branding irons from a European blacksmith who works in Monze. Most people depend upon ear marks, which are also used for goats and pigs, but while these are sufficient identification within the immediate locality, they may not be helpful if the animal strays a long way. In general, identification depends upon a minute description of the appearance of the animal and the owner's ability to pick it out from the other cattle in the kraal.

Chongo chieftaincies. Occasionally the people of Sianjalika also send their cattle to the Kafue. The Mapanza people are said to send their cattle to the Mutama basin. At the Kafue camps, the cattle may be placed under the care of Twa herders, but more commonly the Tonga merely receive permission from the Twa residents of the Kafue margin to build their camps nearby. The men then take it turn about to visit the camp, where they stay for about two weeks before being relieved by a fresh contingent from the village.³¹

Customary law which allows the free range of cattle also permits such dry season movements and the transit of the cattle through the intervening country to reach new pastures. It permits the ranging of cattle during the dry season when no crops are in the fields. And it prevents the growth of any particular sentiment about improving the grazing of a particular area. Thus though a man may be aware that a limitation of the number of cattle would allow him to breed better stock, he has no incentive to limit the number of his own cattle. Their place would be taken by the cattle of his neighbours or even of people from more distant areas, or by cattle moved in on herding arrangements to take advantage of the lessened strain on the available pastures.

The Strain on the Social System

Not only is Tonga country overstocked for the carrying capacity of the land. There is evidence that there are more cattle to-day than the Tonga can cope with successfully with their present methods of organizing the care of their cattle. This aspect of the problem has received little attention. Probably neither administrative officials nor the Tonga themselves are aware of the implications for the management of the herds of the present trend towards family rather than village groups as the local units. The Tonga live to-day very often in small groups, which may consist only of one man with his wife, or wives, and their children. The small group finds it difficult to provide the labour required for both agricultural activities and the care of the herds.

The Organization of Kraal Groups

The matrilineal groups are not organized into local bodies which undertake the care of the cattle owned by their members. Although the Tonga recognizes his obligations to his matrilineal kin, and their obligations to him, he is under no necessity to settle with them. Instead he lives where he chooses, with his maternal relatives, his paternal relatives, his affinal kin, or occasionally with friends who are bound to him through common clanship or perhaps through no tie whatsoever. This apparently has always been true of the Tonga. To-day he is apt to settle on his own, and many villages consist of various small clusters of one or two huts scattered at some distance from each other. In the eastern chieftaincies it seems that there has always been this tendency to scatter. In 1913, when a government official commented

³¹ Cf. also, *The Tonga Report*, p. 117.

on the scattered villages along the upper Magoye River, he was told, ' . . . it is our custom to live so. Otherwise we might quarrel if we all lived close together. Then our cattle must graze.'³² However, the scattering was not as extreme as at the present time, and even in this area informants remember some large compact villages built around a central cattle kraal. In the western chieftaincies this seems to have been the common village plan.

In the description of kraal groups which follows, I shall deal largely with the eastern area which I know best. In the western chieftaincies of Mwanacingwala and Simuyobe, large compact villages are still common, and the kraal groups tend to be larger than in the east. This may be due, in part, to the necessity to send the cattle of these chieftaincies to dry season camps along the Kafue margins.

The men who live in a compact village, or in the clusters of a dispersed village, are likely to belong to different matrilineal groups, and therefore have no rights over each other's cattle. Even where two or more men of the same matrilineal group are living close together, they may show considerable independence in caring for their individual property, especially if they are men of middle age who have established their own independent families. Nevertheless, for various reasons several men may decide to unite to build a common cattle kraal and to arrange for the common herding of their cattle. I shall refer to these groups as kraal groups.

To illustrate the organization of kraal groups within a village, I have chosen a village located in Chona chieftaincy on the edge of the Escarpment. It is relatively conservative and also relatively compact. In 1950 the village had a population of 146 men, women, and children, the populations being distributed as follows :

	Males	Females	Total
Children ³³	33	33	66
Adolescents	13	3	16
Adults	26	38	64
TOTALS	72	74	146

The genealogical chart, page 36, includes eighteen of the twenty six adult males. They are affiliated to six different matrilineal groups, but some tie of kinship, either consanguineal or affinal, connects them all and relates them to the headman, No. 1. The other eight adult males have no such tie. The women of the village are not shown on the chart save where they serve as a link relating the men. The diagram, page 35, shows the placement in the village of the huts and cattle kraals. Huts numbered S1, S2, etc., are inhabited by the unrelated men living in the village.

³² Quoted from a report by the Secretary of Native Affairs for 1913.

³³ This heading includes all children below the apparent age of fourteen.

Nineteen men have cattle in the kraals attached to the village. Probably one or two of the other men own cattle, but these are herded in some other village, and their owners are not members of the kraal groups in this village. Men who have no cattle are not connected with kraal group. Kraal groups are composed as follows :

1. *Kraal A.*—S1 has his own kraal. He lives in a cluster approximately half a mile from the main village with only one other adult male, the insane son of his wife's mother's sister.
2. *Kraal B.*—No. 7 is regarded as the owner of the kraal. He is joined by 17 and 18, his two adult sons, who are teachers and spend only part of the year in the village. When they are away, they leave their few head of cattle with their father.
3. *Kraal C.*—No. 8 is regarded as the owner of the kraal and owns the majority of the cattle kept within it. His is the second largest kraal in the village. With him are 2, who is married to his classificatory sister, and 11, who is married to his full sister. His married son, 16, lives with him but owns no cattle and refuses to work to maintain the kraal.
4. *Kraal D.*—No. 1, the headman, is regarded as the owner of the kraal, which is the largest in the village. He owns the majority of the cattle attached to it. He is joined by 6, his brother's son, and by 12, his sister's daughter's son.
5. *Kraal E.*—No. 5 is regarded as the owner of the kraal. He is joined by 3 and 4, his mother's sisters' sons, by 10, his father's brother's son, and by 13, 14, and 15.
6. *Kraal F.*—S6 has his own kraal.

It is significant that kraal group membership depends upon personal preferences rather than kinship affiliations. The genealogical chart showing the kinship links between those living in a village does not enable one to predict the number or the organization of the kraal groups. No. 2, for instance, joins with 8 rather than with 3, 4 and 5, who are his closest kinsmen. No. 6 remains a member of the kraal group of 1, his father's brother, though it would be equally possible for him to join 7, his sister's husband, or to attempt to persuade 7 and 18, his sister's sons, to join him in a new kraal. No. 5, unlike 6, has left his father's brother to join a kraal group consisting of two close matrilineal kinsmen, one paternal kinsman, and three very remote kinsmen.³⁴

Since personal preference plays such a large part in the membership, kraal groups tend to break up and reform over the years. The history of this same village illustrates this point. The village moved to its present site in 1938 or 1939. Previously it had consisted of scattered

³⁴ On the chart, 13, 14, and 15 are shown only as affinal kin. There are also consanguineal links. Their mother was the headman's mother's mother's brother's daughter. Their father belonged to the headman's matrilineal group though the genealogical links have been forgotten by all concerned.

clusters. These now drew together into a compact village with only one kraal group, which included 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 12, and 15. The other men shown on the genealogical chart were then young boys. The kraal group, and village, also included two brothers of 8 and one brother of 7 who have since moved away to other villages; the father of 13, 14, and 15; the first husband of 11's wife; and a matrilineal kinsman of 1. The last three have since died. The first split in the kraal group occurred about 1941 when 7 and 8, and possibly their brothers, formed a kraal of their own; 7 later returned to the main group, but 8 continued to maintain his own kraal and persuaded 2 and 11 to join him. Then 5 formed a kraal with 3 and 4. About 1947-8, 13, 14, and 15 joined them. In 1950, 10 also left the kraal group of the headman to join this new kraal. Meantime two unrelated men moved in and retained their own kraals rather than join a group already established in the village. S6 moved into the village in 1947; S1 came in 1948. In 1949, 8 moved a short distance from the main village and formed his own kraal, separate from that controlled by 1. About the same time, 9 moved to another village and took his cattle, which had been in 1's kraal, with him. The present arrangement is unlikely to be any more stable than the earlier ones. In 1950, 13 and 14 were establishing themselves in other villages where they lived much of the time returning home only to plant and harvest their crops. It is unlikely that they will long continue their attachment to this village or to a kraal group within it. Meantime as the young boys grow up and gain cattle for themselves, they will change the composition of the groups. Moreover, as the young men who to-day are minor members of the groups succeed in finding herd-boys to care for their cattle, either with the growing up of their own sons or by drawing to themselves their sisters' sons, they will be able to break out of the present kraal groups to establish their own kraals.

The kraal group is an arrangement to provide for the building and maintenance of the cattle kraal and for the provision of herd-boys to care for the cattle during the growing season when they must be herded to prevent damage to the crops. Kraals are roughly circular enclosures built of poles and brush. All members of the kraal group are expected to contribute material and to help in the work of building the enclosure. Thereafter, they are all expected to share in the work of keeping it in repair, of moving the brush and poles to a new site when the kraal must be shifted because of the accumulations of manure. Members must either work themselves or provide a substitute. Each member is expected to bear a full share of the labour, rather than a share proportional to the number of cattle he has in the kraal. Each man should also provide a herd-boy, or several, if this is possible. If a man has living with him either sons or other relatives who are at an age to herd cattle, these become part of the common pool of herd-boys attached to his kraal group. However, not all members of a kraal group are able to provide herd-boys, and this does not restrict their right to have their cattle housed and herded.

DIAGRAMMATIC MAP OF VILLAGE

SYMBOLS:

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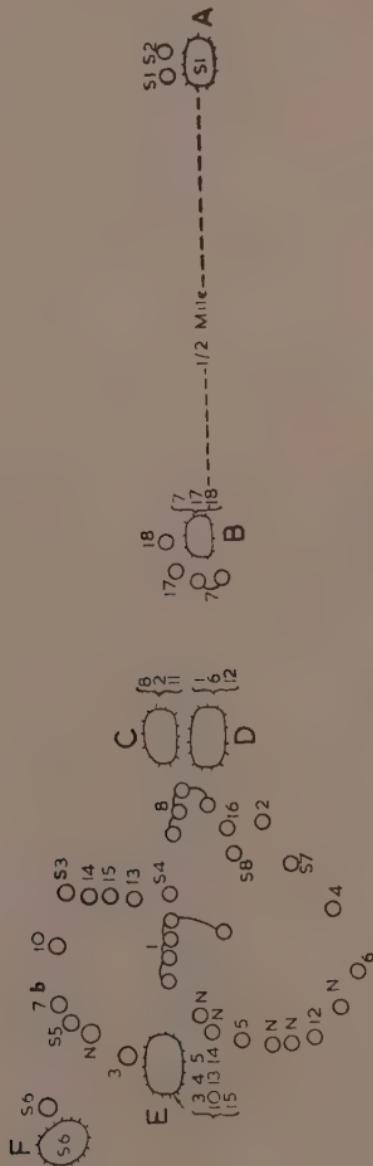
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marks huts inhabited by single women.

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Huts joined by connecting lines belong to one man.

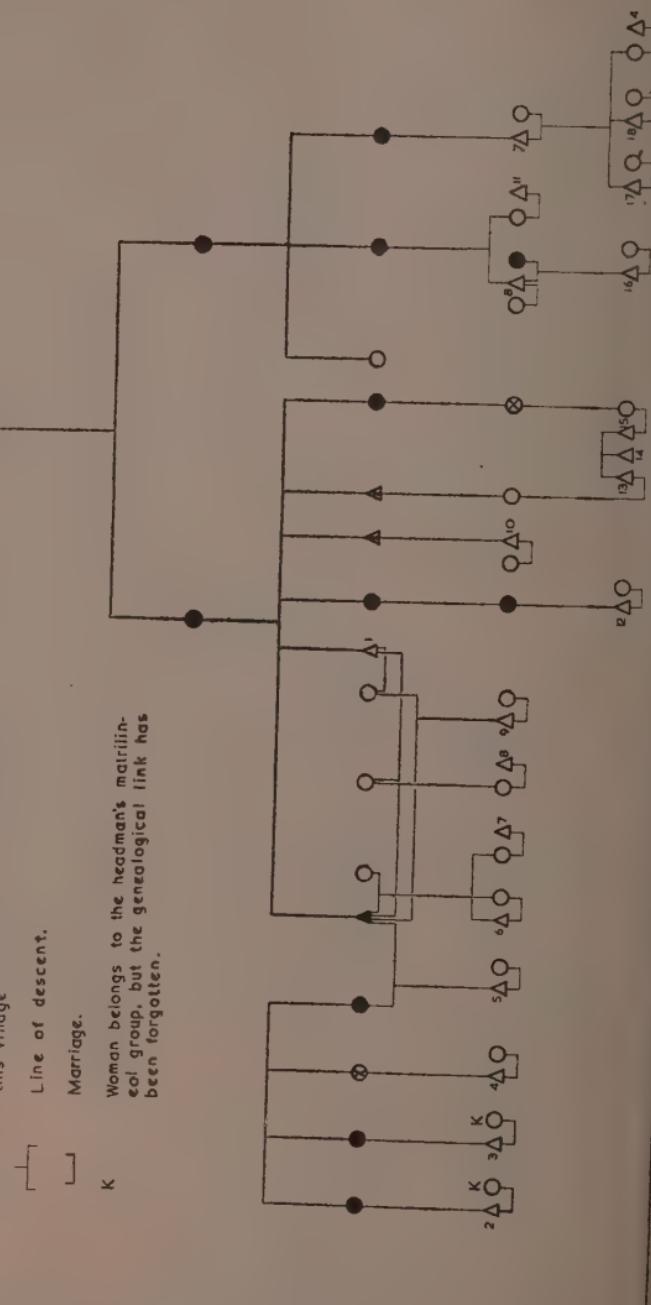


GENEALOGICAL CHART OF VILLAGE

SYMBOLS:

- ▲● The person represented is dead.
- △○ Represents male and female respectively.
- ▲⊗ The person represented does not live in this village.
- Line of descent.
- Marriage.
- K Woman belongs to the headman's matrilineal group, but the genealogical link has been forgotten.

4, 7, and 8 are shown twice on the chart since they have both affinal and consanguineal links.



To turn again to the kraal groups described above :

Kraal A : S1 who has his own kraal has two sons who herd for him.

Kraal B : 7 has two sons and a daughter's son who herd for him.

During school terms, he also has his brother's son who stays with him and attends school.

Kraal C : 8 has one son who herds for him, and two classificatory sisters' sons. 2 has one son and one daughter's son who herd. 11 does not contribute a herdsboy to the pool. However, he appears to do more work than either 8 or 2 in maintaining the kraal and usually supervises the milking.

Kraal D : 1 has two sons as permanent herdsboys and another son who herds when he is home during school vacations. He also supports a classificatory sister's daughter's son who lives with him and herds. 12 contributes no herdsboy and does not seem to take any larger part in the work of the kraal. 6 has a sister's son who lives with him and herds.

Kraal E : None of the men have sons who herd. All the herding is left to two boys, sister's sons of 3. Occasionally a sister's son of 4 will spend a few weeks in the village and then helps with the herding.

Kraal F : S6 who has his own kraal has no sons, and he depends upon his two sister's sons who live with him and herd his cattle.

The herd-boys work in rotation, each boy taking his turn, though when enough boys are attached to the kraal group several boys will herd together. The work is apportioned by the number of boys, rather than by the number of men in the kraal group. If two men form a group and one has two herd-boys and the other only one, each boy will do roughly a third of the work. During the time that he is on duty, each herd-boy is usually in charge of all the cattle of his kraal, no matter to whom they belong. If he shirks his work, his guardian is expected to discipline him. Interference by other members of the group may lead to quarrels and a break-up of the group.

The pooling of labour and of herd-boys by the members of the kraal group has obvious advantages for all concerned. The man who owns many cattle receives the assistance of other men in building and maintaining his kraal. The man who has only a few head need not go to the labour of constructing a separate enclosure for his herd. Men who are unable to attract enough young boys to herd their cattle can obtain assistance from others in the village. However, it should be emphasized that while labour is pooled, the use of cattle is not. Each man sees to it that his own cows are milked, and he is under no obligation to divide the milk with others of his kraal group. Each man uses his own oxen for ploughing and cultivating, and is under no obligation to assist the other members of the group. In actual fact, of course, they do assist each other, since any one who feels dissatisfied with the arrangement can always pull out of the group and join another, or perhaps set up his independent kraal.

Kraal groups do not control rights to pasture, since this is open to all, and a man who withdraws from his kraal group therefore does not lose access to the grazing grounds. The assistance given by one man to another within the kraal group is always phrased as due to the generosity of the giver rather than to his obligation to assist a member of the group. In Kraal Group C, for instance, 2 had no milking cows in 1948. His wife constantly sent to 8 to beg for milk. 8 finally wearied of her petitions, which annoyed his wives, and informed 2 that he could milk two cows and have the milk. He did not give the cattle to 2, but merely assigned him the right to milk the cows, and this loan is revocable whenever 8 wishes. He also provides 11 with milk and allows him to use his oxen for ploughing and other work.

To-day the kraal groups must also deal with the problem of the division of the manure which accumulates in the kraal. Traditionally kraal sites were used for planting tobacco, and this is still done in some areas. Each member of the group might receive a strip of the area, or the largest cattle owner in the group might take the whole of the site for his own. In many areas to-day, the manure is used to maintain the fertility of the fields, and the right to a share in the manure may give rise to numerous quarrels. In this village manure rights are not a problem, since only 1 and 8 use it on their fields. Elsewhere in the hilly country along the Escarpment, not all men find it necessary to use manure in their fields, but they may still consider it an infliction if someone else takes manure from their common kraal. Thus John of Shanamoonga village in Chona chiefdom originally kraaled his cattle with those of his affinal relatives. He was the only member of the kraal group who wished to use manure on his fields, but when he began to take manure from the kraal, they began to complain, 'John is growing rich from our cattle.' He therefore withdrew from the kraal and built his own. In other areas, the owners of a kraal have worked out various arrangements to govern the division of manure.

At Chepa village, in Mwanza chieftaincy, two different systems are in use. One kraal group is composed of Simon and Peter, two full brothers; their paternal half-brother, Jonathan, and their mother's sister's son, Reuben. The four men have divided into pairs and each pair takes manure every alternate year. During the year in which a man may not take manure from the kraal, he attempts to buy up kraal sites from less progressive neighbours, an expedient which is becoming more difficult as the use of manure spreads. They divide the manure equally, although the different men do not have comparable numbers of cattle. Jonathan who has only a few cattle receives the same share as Simon who has five or six times as many. In the same village, the headman and those who share his kraal mark the surface into rough divisions, roughly proportional to the number of cattle each man has in the kraal. Each man receives a share each year, but the headman, who is the largest owner, receives the lion's share. In the western chieftaincies of Mwanacingwala and Simuyobe, few men use manure and it is not a matter of argument. Elsewhere, it is becoming

an important element in the desire of men to have their own kraals and thus leads to the break-up of the kraal groups.

In many villages, the kraal groups are even smaller than those described above, and more and more the work of maintaining a kraal is coming to fall upon one or two men and such half-grown boys as live with them.³⁵ This is occurring at the same time that the herds are increasing and the work involved likewise mounts as larger kraals are required. Probably the individual kraal of to-day is often larger than the village kraal of an earlier generation, though the former must be maintained by one or two men and the latter could depend upon the efforts of many. The Native Authority, moreover, has passed a ruling that the size of kraals must be increased to prevent the crowding of animals into inadequate enclosures. So far, this seems to have had little effect, but once enforced it will make the maintenance of the individual kraal still more difficult. At the same time, in many areas suitable timber is becoming short and men wishing to build or repair a kraal must go a good distance to find materials. In the more progressive villages, wealthier men have begun to discuss the possibility of buying wire to surround the kraal in place of brush, and this would ease some of the problem, but only for the wealthy. Men who cannot afford wire, and these are in the vast majority, may be driven back into larger kraal groups as the shortage of timber prevents them from maintaining their own kraals. The major factor, however, that prevents kraal groups diminishing further in size is the difficulty of obtaining herd-boys.

The Struggle for Herd-boys

Cattle are usually herded only during the season between the planting and the harvesting of the crop, a period lasting roughly from sometime in November to June. The cattle owner is then faced with the urgent problem of finding young boys who will herd his cattle for him. He himself must be in the fields if he is to produce a crop, and has little time to supervise the boys and the herds. It is a time when major conflicts within the family group are likely to arise, as the boys attempt to evade their herding duties and the men grow more and more resentful as they see their cattle straying through the bush and invading the fields.

The conflict, and the problem of finding herd-boys, has been always at least latent in this area, but it has become more and more apparent with the increase of herds, the diminishing of grazing, and the increased competition for herd-boys with the disappearance of large kraal groups.

In earlier years, when the Tonga feared the raids of predatory beasts on their herds, they assigned young men to the task of herding. Men

³⁵ I have information on the number of kraals attached to 13 different villages scattered in Chona, Uswenuka and Mwanza chieftancies. The village described above has the largest number of men per kraal (26·6 or 4·33) of any of the thirteen. The mean number of men per kraal is 3·09 over the thirteen villages.

continued to herd cattle until they married, at about the age of twenty-five, or even later, and the younger boys were inducted into their duties as members of a group of herders headed by adults. To-day young men refuse to have anything to do with herding, and if necessary go off as labour migrants to establish their independence. I have heard boys of fourteen and fifteen complain that they are now too old to be sent out with the cattle and that the work should be passed on to a younger child. Their complaints are ignored, but it is rare in the eastern districts to see a boy who is over sixteen who is still herding and most herd-boys are youngsters from about the age of seven to fourteen.³⁶

Often the boys are most reluctant herders whatever their age and are only kept at work by the threats, and sometimes the physical chastisement, of their elders. Small boys, from about five to seven years, are allowed to go out as they please, and no effort is made to force them to remain with the cattle. Older boys may be driven to the cattle kraal by an irate parent or guardian who flourishes a stick or cattle whip. The boys argue that herding is hard work with few compensations. For various reasons, herding is indeed harder work than it was a generation ago, though the Tonga adult tends to ignore the new difficulties and blames the boys for their laxness.

Fewer boys are available to share the duties to-day, partially because of the refusal of older boys to do their share, partially because of the encroachment of the schools. Families eager to send their sons to school attempt to arrange herding duties so that all the children have an opportunity to attend. This is possible since classes in the village schools are staggered, some meeting in the morning and others in the afternoon. But in some cases, all the boys of the family, or even of the kraal group, would be in school during the same hours. The child who must be kept from school to herd resents his position, even though he himself loathes the thought of school and prefers herding to class-work, and he has harder work coping with the cattle than if he had assistance from the other boys.

The dispersal of the village into isolated clusters, and the diminishing size of the kraal groups also play their part in the difficulty of herding. Where all the boys of a village or of a large cluster may be sufficient to perform the herding duties without any undue burden on any one child, the smaller kraal group is usually short of boys and probably has to send out the herd under the care of one small child. The one

³⁶ In the western chieftaincies which send their cattle to the Kafue margins this is not true. Because of the danger from lions along the Kafue margins, older men take an active part in the herding at the cattle camps, and younger boys are present only as servants and apprentices who look after calves. Even so, they do not go to the camps until they are about twelve years old, at a time when their age-mates in the east have long been active herd-boys. Boys of eighteen and older are still herding cattle without complaint though their chance to escape is quite as good as that of their fellows in the east. However, the herding at the Kafue camps takes place during the dry season when the men are free from agricultural work. I failed to investigate herding arrangements during the growing season.

boy herding alone is likely to be less efficient, as well as more thoroughly bored, than were the herd-boys in the days when five or six boys might herd together, and where the older boys had an informal hazing system for initiating younger lads, which may have made life more strenuous but certainly more interesting. At the same time there was an opportunity for closer supervision of the herds, and the older boys had more opportunity to pass their wood lore and cattle lore on to their younger mates. To-day when one small boy, perhaps only nine or ten years old, has solitary charge of a herd which may contain as many as fifty beasts, the life is hard and less likely to contain mitigating moments of excitement. Sometimes boys from various kraal groups will take their herds together, but it is more common to herd alone.

Herding is also made more difficult by the increase in cultivation which has cut into the land available for pasturing the cattle. The boys must be on constant guard lest their cattle stray from the grazing areas into the neighbouring fields which encroach on all sides.

The boys who are herding the cattle usually have little immediate interest in the animals which they herd. A boy has no assurance that he will ever inherit or have the use of any of the cattle he is expected to tend, even though some of them belong to his own guardian. If he is herding for his father, he knows that he will not inherit; for his father's heirs are the members of the matrilineal group and not the sons. If he is herding for a matrilineal relative, he knows that his rights to inherit are only the same as those of any other matrilineal relative, including those who have never cared for the cattle. His elders may tell him that he is earning cattle for his bridewealth, but he is aware that his father and his matrilineal relatives will feel a duty to provide in any case. The Tonga child, therefore, does not feel the same identification with the herd, or with the fortunes of his family, that a child does in a patrilineal system where his work leads eventually to his own advancement. When the Tonga child complains to his mother about the trials of herding, she is likely to sympathize and comment that she sees no reason why he should work for his father since he can not inherit. If he is herding for a matrilineal relative, he knows that the wife and the older children resent his presence as a reminder of the ultimate inheritance of the matrilineal group.

The resentment of the boys sometimes crystallizes against the cattle in their care, and this may lie behind the accidental deaths to which cattle are liable during the herding season when the too vigorous wielding of the long cattle whip may kill a calf, or the beating of an older beast may cripple it so that it has to be killed. The boys also abandon their herds to wander through the bush and into the fields while they fill themselves with sweet-stalked kaffir corn stolen from the fields, or search for honey in the bush, or start small bush fires to hunt for birds. These games receive added zest from their appetites; for few take any food with them to the bush, and they depend upon milk and such products as they can discover on the road to tide them over until the

return to the village in the late afternoon. At night, if a beast or two is missing from the herd, the boys are likely to worry very little. Then the men may spend the next day or so searching for strayed beasts, or facing indignant cultivators who have found the cattle eating the maize in their fields. At night and during the day, the cattle are thus left relatively free to raid the fields. Meantime the men grow more and more indignant with the boys, accusing them of making no attempt to earn their keep, forgetful of their own youthful delinquencies and also of the increased difficulties of herding.

If the herding presses upon a boy too heavily, he takes refuge with other relatives, thinking perhaps to lighten his work. For instance, a boy of ten was lying on the ground one day sulking after a berating by his father. His age-mates speculated as to whether or not he was planning to run away to his 'own home' (*kwabo*), by which they meant to his mother's brothers who lived some ten miles away. On the other hand, boys living with their matrilineal kin may abscond to their fathers or to their father's relatives or to other matrilineal kin. And either lot may go off to distant relatives or to strangers, for such is the demand for herd-boys that they are assured of a welcome. If they find their refuge no better than their original condition, they will again run off, either back to their homes or to some other village. To some extent, however, they are likely to be able to force a better bargain from distant relatives or from strangers than they can from their own parents or immediate matrilineal relatives, even though they do not become hired labour. They are given their food and clothing by the man for whom they work, though the clothing may not be abundant, and they also expect that when they mature the man will consider himself responsible for at least a portion of their marriage payments or the fines and damages which they are likely to accumulate in adultery and paternity suits. Many of them, however, return home again within a few months or years. Others remain on with one man until they are adults, and some then settle permanently in his village. There is no formal agreement, however, which binds the boy to the man for whom he works, and some men use the situation to take advantage of the boys. They work them hard during their early adolescence and then make life more and more difficult as the boys mature, in an effort to drive them away before they are quite old enough to claim assistance for damage suits or marriage.

Many boys attempt a further escape. They run away to find work on European farms in the neighbourhood or with the Indians who live in the railway hamlets. For such work, a boy receives a small cash payment each month which allows him to clothe himself more handsomely than his own parents or the relatives to whom he may attach himself will usually think necessary. This work, however, will not give him a claim to assistance on his marriage payments, for he no longer is working in the same system of kinship obligations which governs work done for other Tonga. It is a short term solution, but one which appeals to lads who are still too young to be concerned

with marriage. It is therefore common for a boy to depart without warning, leaving his herd to wander in the bush and his guardian to find another herd-boy to take his place.

The village used in the previous section illustrates the difficulties faced by the Tonga in providing adequate numbers of herdsboys for their cattle. Only nineteen boys were available for herding duties all the time. A boy of about seven occasionally went out with the others but could not be trusted to remain with the herds and was not considered in the planning of duties. Another boy of about nine occasionally herded with the others, but he was feeble-minded and could not be induced to work for any length of time. Frequently he ran away to relatives for a few days or weeks and then ran home again. At a rough guess the boys were herding about 250 cattle, but the cattle were not divided evenly among the kraals. Only eight boys were sons of members of the kraal group, and only five men had sons in the village who were of an age suitable for herding. Five other boys were considered to belong to the village and to be resident there—all of them sons of men in the village—but two were at school most of the time and three had gone away to work. The men had managed to bring in other boys to work for them. These were either grandsons or matrilineal relatives. Some of the latter were so distantly related to the men for whom they herded that their genealogical links were quite unknown; others were uterine sister's sons. Other children on whom they had a claim refused to come to them. 12 had a son of fourteen, who as a small boy went to live with a younger brother of 12. When he was about 13, he ran away to work on a European farm where he still works. He has never herded cattle for his father. 8 has two sons who left him when their mothers were divorced, and though they occasionally visit him for a day or two, they never stay for any length of time with him.

A few boys remain with the same cattle throughout their herding lives and learn to know them intimately; others shift from herd to herd, affected both by their own mobility and by the changing kraal group membership of their guardians. In 1949, Kraal C had five herds-boys: Mark and Mathew, classificatory sisters' sons of 8; Jacob and Joseph, sons of 2; and Peter, daughter's son of 2. By early 1950, Mark and Mathew had run away to work on a European farm; and Jacob had vanished to work for a distant matrilineal relative who lived some twenty miles or more away. None of them had any intention of returning in any immediate future. To replace them, 8 managed to secure his own son, a lad of about seventeen, who had been living with matrilineal relatives in Lusaka, and two other boys of his matrilineal group. One was the son of his mother's mother's sister's daughter's daughter; the other was the son of a very distant classificatory sister who had come to live with him after her divorce. The last boy made at least one attempt to run away during the year.

The mobility of the boys is partially produced by the conflicts implicit in the Tonga kinship system, since a child is affiliated both to its

father and to its own matrilineal group and has the right to live with either. The situation is made more acute by the present competition of fathers and matrilineal groups, as well as by unrelated men and by those completely outside the system, such as Indian store-keepers and European farmers, for the labour of the boys. It does not lead to an efficient herding system.

There are few signs that the Tonga are evolving any method of coping with the situation. In the Mujika area of Mwanza chieftaincy, and perhaps elsewhere, a few men have been forced by the shortage of boys to send their herds out in the care of small girls.³⁷ Traditionally girls and women should have no contact with cattle, and were not allowed to approach cattle kraals. The Tonga maintain that this is only a matter of custom and that neither women or cattle can be harmed by the contact, but nevertheless they dislike the expedient of using girls for herding duties. A few men have attempted to protect their own fields from the cattle by fencing with brush or quick growing plants, but this is not general and does not release the field owner from the obligation to see that his own cattle are herded to keep them from the unfenced fields of others. There is no general interest in fencing. The Tonga say that this would be a major undertaking possible only for those who have considerable labour, and impossible for a man who works by himself with the assistance of a wife and small children.

Meantime the damage done to the growing crops reaches considerable proportions. The owner of the damaged field may sue the owners of the marauding cattle and receive compensation for the damage, but in many areas the cultivators swallow their losses on the principle that ultimately the damage done by their own cattle will offset what they gain from the suit. At Chona village, for instance, one family lost most of its maize for three years running because of cattle damage. In each year their store of grain was exhausted before the next crop, and they either had to buy food or exist on the charity of their relatives. The third year, they were furious and said their say to the owners of the cattle, but they refused to demand compensation. Others are not as long suffering, but only a small proportion of the damage done is reported to the courts or made the subject for compensation.

Those Tonga who live adjacent to the European farm strip have further difficulties, since their cattle often stray onto European land. The result depends upon the particular relationships established between the European farmer and the Africans. A few Europeans consider it both courteous and good sense to stay on good terms with their African neighbours and it is understood that strayed stock from either side of the boundary will be returned to the owner without action being taken. In practice this may mean that the European is the loser financially, but he gains in general good relations with his neighbours. Other farmers order straying cattle to be rounded up and

³⁷ Men occasionally herd for a day or two in an emergency, but this is uncommon.

have them sent to the official cattle pound. The owners are required to pay a fee to redeem their cattle. If a beast is not redeemed within a certain period of time, it is sold and the owner receives no compensation. The laxness of the herding may therefore result in serious financial loss to those Tonga who live near European land.³⁸

The Desire for Independence

Despite the difficulties faced by the immediate family group in coping with the labour involved in agricultural production, the upkeep of the homestead, and the management of the cattle herd, the break-up into individual family groups continues. Various motives are involved. Some of them have already been mentioned, such as quarrels over the division of manure and over the delinquencies of herdsboys. Families also move away from the main village to build their own homesteads because of quarrels over chickens or annoyance at the depredations of the pigs and goats owned by their neighbours.

Of more importance, however, is the desire, on the part of the men, to become the head of an independent unit and thus gain in status. As long as a man remains within an established village, or a section of a village, he is regarded as a subordinate of the established head of the village or section. His subordination may be of little practical moment. He may neither assist nor be assisted by his head. He may act quite independently. Nevertheless, he will be identified with the head by other members of the community, and will feel that he has not yet achieved an independent status, which will entitle him to recognition by other Tonga as an important member of the community.

He gradually establishes his own identity by differentiating himself from the household and interests of the older man with whom he lives and upon whom he has been dependent as an unmarried boy and as a young married man. He first acquires his own hut and his own fields and granary. When he has completed the payment of his bridewealth and his wife's relatives give permission for the couple to cook and to make beer, he establishes his independent household under the aegis of his ancestors, whom he can now approach for the first time with offerings. The next step is reached when he can build his own cattle kraal, a step which calls for a special offering of beer to the ancestors. When he can build his own homestead, separate from a cluster housing other men, he has progressed still further. From then on his status increases as he can attract other men to accept his leadership and settle with him. But other men are also ambitious

³⁸ Occasionally a European takes advantage of Tonga customary law which does not restrict pastures to residents of a particular area and allows his herds to graze into the reserves. Near the Magoye there was still good grazing in July 1950, when I passed that way with several Tonga. They pointed to a large herd grazing along the margins of the road, well within the reserve, and commented, 'Mr. X has sent his cattle to our grazing again. He wants to save his own for later in the season, and so he sends his cattle to eat up our grass.'

and desire the independence of their own homesteads. To-day there is little pressure to keep them within a larger cluster, and the homesteads with their attendant cattle kraals proliferate.

Thus as the cattle have increased, the units which supervise the herds have grown smaller until to-day they are probably attempting to cope with more cattle than they can effectively manage without some change in their methods of cattle management.

Summary

This paper has dealt with the role of cattle among the Tonga in an attempt to understand Tonga attitudes toward suggestions of de-stocking and to consider the strains placed upon Tonga organization by the possession of large numbers of cattle.

The Tonga recognize individual rights to cattle and most cattle are owned by individuals rather than by groups. Nevertheless, the Tonga social system requires a man to balance his rights to dispose of his property against his obligations to assist his kinsmen, and particularly the members of his matrilineal group. While he has the recognized right to dispose of individual animals, he is expected to consider the requirements of his kin before he disposes of any major portion of his herd. Men scatter their cattle through a system of herding arrangements which spread the possession of cattle widely throughout the community, while at the same time the owner retains his prior rights to resume possession or to dispose of his property. The man in possession of a beast may therefore have no right to sell it or dispose of it in any way, and the man who has the right of disposal may live at some distance. This system is possible since the Tonga value cattle for their role in symbolizing social ties rather than for their immediate utility. To-day this view of cattle is still strong though it is beginning to break down with the development of new uses to which cattle can be put and also with the development of a cash market and the need for a cash income.

The possession of large herds clashes with the trend towards independent homesteads composed of small family groups. The small groups are short of labour for building and maintaining cattle kraals, and, still more important, find great difficulty in providing a sufficient number of herd-boys to herd the cattle during the period between planting and harvesting. There is a constant competition for the labour of herd-boys, who move from group to group or run off to work for Europeans and Indians in neighbouring areas, with resulting inefficiency in herding.

VILLAGE CRAFTS IN BAROTSELAND

by

G. COOPER

AS PART of a programme of rural development, an attempt is being made to organize village crafts of Barotseland into something akin to village industries. There is quite a difference between a village industry which aims at giving regular and perhaps permanent employment to village people, and a village craft which may only be followed casually; and it is no easy task to try to organize what are at present merely casual and sometimes transient crafts into the more stabilized and permanent industry.

To achieve the latter end there must be a rationalized approach to production, a maintenance of the standard of workmanship, and some kind of guaranteed market, if the rural African is to be persuaded to remain in his village and work. It is, however, sometimes difficult to persuade him that if his own particular skill is to be turned into real profit and advantage to him then he must be prepared to work regularly and to maintain his standard of work.

In many rural areas it would be practically impossible to contemplate such an end, for few village crafts are sufficiently adaptable to modern needs to make it possible to graft them on to any wider economic pattern than the subsistence economy which contributed to their first appearance. Many village crafts merely satisfied the rudimentary needs of a primitive society. They provided the necessary implements of everyday use: pots and mats, axes and spears, bowls and baskets. They also served as the wherewithal for barter. To-day many of these old crafts and skills are disappearing because the articles they produce cannot compete with the imported mass-produced article. In some instances the crafts are dying out because they are not capable of withstanding a demand for a much greater production or a more developed technique than was formerly required for local needs; and yet, this they must do if they wish to survive.

Barotseland stands out from the other rural areas by the quality of its local village crafts, their multiplicity, and also, even at this stage, their vitality. Despite disruptive and disorganizing influences, many village trades have proved capable, though perhaps only in a simple way, of finding markets outside Barotseland. Can these village crafts, which owe their origin to primitive economic needs, be developed to form the bases of village industries which will improve the rural economy, and help arrest some of the destructive trends in African rural society?

The denuding of village life by the continual drift of Africans towards the urban areas; the break-up of rural society by the absence

of the young and able-bodied of both sexes, who are often forced by present economic necessity to go to town or mine; these are aspects of present-day African society which are all too familiar, and they produce results which are often disastrous both to the individual and the community. They are only too obvious in a province like Barotseland where at the moment the largest exportable commodity seems to be labour. What is needed is an incentive to encourage the African to remain in his village and yet not to feel that he is either inferior because he does so, or that he is denied the opportunities which come to others who become urbanized—for example, the opportunity to earn money regularly and so enjoy some of the mild benefits which money can provide.

That incentive can be provided, in some ways, by encouraging village industries, and it is the writer's view that Barotseland in particular would derive no small amount of good if it becomes possible to develop fully some of its comprehensive village crafts into industries which will be able to provide both work and money for those who wish to remain in the rural areas.

Barotseland may be fortunate in the fact that the province has been spared, up to the present, some of the more violent shocks of being urged quickly into a world economy. This may be due in some part to its isolation. Until a few years ago there were no more than perhaps half a dozen motor cars in the whole province. The principle means of transport were the river barge, canoe, ox-wagon, ox-sleigh, bush car, horse and donkey. Roads were practically non-existent, and sleigh tracks and bush paths were the connecting links between the main centres. The Zambezi was, and in some ways still is, the main highway into and out of the province.

In very recent times many of these things have been changed. Roads have been cleared in many parts of the province. The ubiquitous jeep has made its appearance and helped to open up some formerly remote and inaccessible (except on foot) regions. Regular lorry services are maintained between the provincial capital at Mongu and the railhead at Mulobezi, and many other appurtenances of a mechanical civilization are finding their way into this remote province. Power barges have appeared on the Zambezi, and there is a regular link with the outside world by means of the aeroplane. The impact of all this naturally has led to many changes and readjustments in the life of Barotse people.

The extent to which changes take place in a primitive community when its social and economic life is brought into contact with other cultures depends largely upon the depth and intensity of the impact and whether it is violent or gradual. Within living memory to quote from Godfrey and Monica Wilson's *Analysis of Social Change*, men's relations in Central Africa were primitive; now they are being very rapidly civilized. The economy of the primitive societies was one of subsistence agriculture, or subsistence pastoralism, or a mixture of both, with the addition of a few simple crafts. There was little

specialization and, with one great exception, there was only local trade. Each village or settlement produced nearly everything it needed.

That was, and in some instances still is, true of Barotseland. For a primitive community, there was perhaps more specialization, particularly with regard to village trades, than may have been found in other African communities. Many tribes have the prerogative of certain skills and techniques, but broadly speaking Barotseland was like many other parts of Africa before any large-scale contact with Europeans took place.

Consequent on its comparative remoteness there has been a longer period of survival for some of its traditional crafts. Perhaps it is true to say that native arts and crafts linger on longer after a primitive community has come into contact with a civilized community than do many other of its customary activities, because so many of them are linked closely with the social patterns of the people. Sleeping mats are still in great demand because, generally speaking, the rural African has not yet accepted fully the idea of sleeping on a bed, and seems to prefer sleeping on a mat on the ground. In Barotseland, at any rate, many people still prefer the locally made hoe for cultivating to the imported variety. Fish nets in Barotseland are still made in the manner of olden times, from the same materials and with the same techniques, yet one finds in other areas, for example around Lake Tanganyika, where motor cars and lorries are more abundant than in Barotseland, that the weavers no longer use indigenous fibres but prefer old motor car tyres stripped down.

Therefore, perhaps because Barotseland is nearer the beginning of the transitional period between primitive and modern, there are still enough traditional village crafts for us to study them and say whether it is possible for any of them to survive the influences of the changing world.

Early travellers to Barotseland all declare that they were impressed with the industrial skill of the Barotse tribes. It is not suggested that any of these skills were highly developed; but it seems that the Barotse tribes, compared with many others, were more highly industrialized. From olden times they have done wicker work, and have a great facility in the manipulation of iron and wood, which Coillard declared they used with 'much taste and skill'. When Livingstone visited the Kololo chief, Sebituane, he tells us he was given a present of 'prepared skins of oxen as soft as cloth . . . to cover us through the night', thus indicating that they were adept at dressing skins. Chief Lewanika himself, according to Coillard, was a most industrious and clever craftsman and was continually making things both for himself and for his friends. Though the Barotse had hardly any tools besides knives and hoes, when they saw the implements used by the missionaries they tried to copy them, and succeeded admirably in making nails and shovels which they had never seen before. The Barotse royal family possessed this gift of craftsmanship to a high

degree, and elsewhere Coillard remarks that Lewanika could construct anything from a house to a carved ivory hair-pin, and was quite adept at basket work. Lewanika spent much of his time in a workshop he had built, and every year he constructed a state barge, called the *Nalikwandum*, and launched it when the flood rose on the Barotse plain, surmounted with some new figure-head to excite the wonder of his people.

Perhaps this real interest in handicrafts and industry by members of the ruling class helped to encourage other tribes who possessed skills of different varieties to settle in the province.

The striking thing about many of the village crafts in the Barotse province is the extent of specialization that is found. One tribe concentrates on basket work of a certain type, another on iron work, another on wooden articles, another on skin work, and so on. Some missions in Barotseland have found it almost impossible to persuade boys who belong to tribes which traditionally have not used wicker as medium to learn this method of basket construction. Specialization of techniques is found also between men and women as well as between tribes. Among tribes who customarily use wicker (*makengi*) for basket weaving, the women do a much finer type of weaving than the men. Since the future of basket weaving as an industry must rest with men playing the larger part, one man was asked to copy a basket which had been made by a woman. At first he refused and said it was impossible for him to do it. Eventually, after much persuasion, he agreed, and produced an article far superior to anything that the women could make. He was surprised that he could do it and said that traditionally it was the women's method and men never used it.

It is interesting to speculate on the reasons for this specialization in techniques, especially as between the various tribes. While to-day it can be explained away, as it invariably is by the people themselves, by saying it is 'their custom', or that it is traditional, it is more than probable that the real reason is environmental, and that Barotseland owes the variety of its village crafts to the wide variety of its vegetation. The people seem to have made use of practically every type of workable medium in the country, whether it be grass, reeds, sisal fibres, palm fibres, wood, tree roots, iron, clay or ivory, or even horns of their cattle.

The all-dominating ecological pattern which has influenced their cultivation and fishing techniques has also played a large part in determining what particular technique a man or a woman may use in the construction of a basket or in filling in idle moments. As one moves from regions of Bulozi near the Zambezi to the plain edge and thence into the bush, so the media used for various simple village techniques change.

The village woman living in the centre of the plain makes her household utensils from the fine grasses and reeds which are found in abundance around the shallow depressions on the plain and near the river itself. The woman living on the edge of the plain bordering the bush

compromises and uses a mixture of plain grasses and bush fibres, while the woman living in the heart of the bush uses only the products of the bush, usually the tough fibrous roots of the commonest trees which produce the wicker called *makengi*. The common sleeping mat is also influenced considerably by these environmental changes. Near the river is found a stout variety of papyrus, and from this the Lozi plain-dwellers weave an intricate durable mat which they call *sibiluti*, while the bush-dweller makes his mat from a commoner reed found in the bush, decorated with a common bush fibre called *mashandi*.

Men's skills have also been influenced by their environment. The plainsmen, even to-day, are the ones who are most skilled in the use of a palm fibre, called *mukulwani*, for it is largely on the Barotse plain that this fibre is found in any quantity. In past days, and sometimes to-day, the men at the cattle posts filled in their idle moments weaving grass hats from this fibre, or making coil baskets from the same medium. It is among the plain-dwellers also that one finds the most skilful skin dressers, and here again the reason is perhaps environmental as much as anything else, since the plainsmen are the biggest cattle owners and skins are always at hand. The bush-dweller on the other hand contents himself with fashioning things from the products of his forest home, drums, stamping blocks, canoes, paddles, food bowls, and a great variety of other wooden articles.

By far the greater variety of skills are to be found among the, strictly speaking, non-Lozi tribes, though the prevailing custom to-day seems to be for all tribes living in the hinterland of the plain to call themselves Lozi. This would perhaps bear out the suggestion that these various non-Lozi tribes were allowed to settle around the Barotse plain in the past, by their more powerful Lozi rulers, because of their industrial gifts. In fact they were the hewers of wood and drawers of water for the Lozi, whose particular gifts were largely of a political nature. Dr. Gluckman in his *Economy of the Central Barotse Plain* explains in a comprehensive manner the way in which the particular and various skills of these subject tribes were woven into the complex fabric of the Lozi internal economy. The Lozi king was, in his estimation, the ' clearing house ' for the products of these skills which were brought to the capital as tribute.

Barotse skills cover a wide field, for, as already indicated, there is a more than ample variety of raw material to hand to interest the ingenious and industrious villager. They include basket weaving, mat making, hat weaving, skin dressing, wood carving, iron work, and pottery.

Basket Weaving : Barotse tribes have long been known by Europeans for their skill as basket makers. Two principal kinds of material are used in basket work : *makengi*, a fibrous tree root; and *mukulwani*, a strong pliable palm fibre. The biggest users, and in fact the most skillful users, of *makengi* are the Old Mbunda people who live largely on the plain edge around the summer capital of the

Paramount Chief at Limalunga. The ancestors of the present-day Old Mbunda were allowed to settle here by Lewanika, and perhaps were allowed to do so as much for their traditional skill in basketry as for their renown as magicians.

To obtain *makengi* fibre, they dig up the small roots of trees and pare off the outer skin. The root is then placed in water for a short time and when sufficiently pliable is pared down with a knife to the required thickness. The traditional method of basket construction is a coil one. A thin tenuous strand, called *mwana* ('child') is bound firmly and evenly around a thicker stem called *musheme* ('parent') and this in turn is coiled in a clock-wise direction to any required depth. After the first foundation circuit is made, a pointed metal needle is used and a hole is made through which the *mwana* is patiently threaded by hand. It is a labourious and painstaking task, yet very fine results can be achieved. A good workman will make as many as thirty stitches to the inch and will work very intricate diaper patterns, usually in material dyed black or red. On the whole men are more artistically inclined than women, largely perhaps because to-day men weave with a European market in view while the majority of women weave only for utilitarian reasons. They produce a wide range of styles in basket ware and show great ingenuity in adapting their traditional technique to a changing situation.

The designs they use to-day appear to have changed little from those of long ago. They are composed chiefly of a series of zigzag lines, or variations of a diamond pattern. Sometimes the pattern is a full diaper, sometimes a half diaper. Occasionally an animal, principally a highly conventional type of zebra, is worked into the design, and sometimes a human figure design is used. Early travellers suggested that these designs proved that the Barotse tribes had had some contact with the Zimbabwe ruins in Southern Rhodesia, since similar designs are found there. Selous and others point out that the designs found in the ruins bore a strong family likeness to those in fashion among what he called 'the highly industrialized Barotse'. However, to-day the Barotse people who have had any contacts with the south through their ancestors rarely use these zigzag and diamond patterns. They favour squares and rectangles, or human and animal figures, and declare that these are their traditional designs. The people who to-day use this zigzag type of design, and who maintain it is their tradition to do so, are those who have a close affinity with the west rather than the south. The Old Mbunda invariably use this type of design, and present-day immigrants from the west, whose principle medium for basket construction is *makengi*, also decorate their wares with similar patterns.

The other material used largely in central Barotseland for basket construction is the *mukulwani*, a species of palm fibre. The use of this material for basket construction is confined chiefly to the plain-dwellers, since it is found on their doorsteps, and outside central Barotseland very few villagers appear to be adept in its use, simply

because it is not found in their locality. It is from this fibre that the Lozi weave their large attractive coil baskets, which are in demand by Europeans as linen baskets.

The principle of construction is practically the same as that used for wicker—only the centre core is made from very fine grass. Around this, using a type of 'over-stitch' method of sewing, the Lozi workman sews the fibre, working in at the same time a pattern, chiefly of geometric squares or rectangles, or animal and human figures. The fibre is extracted from the centre of the palm tree, or rather shrub, since it grows only to shrub height, and much labour is involved in the production of the strands which eventually are woven into the finished article.

Traditionally this work seems to belong predominantly to the plain-dwellers, though other tribes sometimes use the fibre to make a plaited rather than a coil basket. Old Lozi men say that their method of basket work before the the Kololo invasion was that of plaiting, rather than coil weaving, and that it was the Kololo who taught them the method of using 'grass in the middle', that is, coil weaving.

The majority of baskets woven to-day in this material are the work of men. Women use *mukulwani* only occasionally, and usually not with any degree of skill.

Mat Making : Mat making shows the ingenious way in which the Barotse tribes have made use of the large variety of materials at hand for pursuing the craft, and again the rigidity of specialization between women's work and men's work. Broadly speaking, there are five principle types of mat weaving existent to-day among the Barotse tribes. They differ in technique and in material used.

The common sleeping mat, called *liluka*, is made chiefly by the Kwangwa tribes living to the east of the Barotse plain. This is a simple affair, made from common reeds which are found around nearly all the shallow lakes which are a familiar feature of the bush to the east of the plain. The reeds are tied simply together by means of a stout thread made from *mashandi*, the bark of the roots of the *matuya* tree. This is men's work.

A refinement of this type of mat is called *mananga*, which strictly is the name for the design worked on the mat. The same type of reed is used, but a close and intricate pattern, sometimes solely geometric, sometimes animals such as zebra or crocodile, is woven in with *mashandi*. Not many mats of this kind are made to-day, for the workmanship involved is considerable. In the past they seem to have been the prerogative of chiefs and to-day very few are seen, except in the homes of people like Indunas. This also is men's work.

A third type of mat, made solely by men and not seen very much to-day, is called *sibiluti*. This is made from a papyrus type of reed found near the Zambezi, and is an exceptionally strong and durable mat. The reeds are joined together in concertina fashion, with the

threads hidden inside the reed. It is very complicated and again because of the great work involved very few are made to-day. The specialized craft has almost disappeared.

Women seem to produce two main types of mat. One is called *museme wa Sikololo*, and obviously refers to a type of mat weaving learned from the Kololo. The method used is very similar to the *sibiluti* in that the reeds are joined together by a thread which runs through the centre of the reed, and not, as with the simple *liluka* by being bound round the outside of it. The women's decorative version of this mat, corresponding to the *mananga* made by men, is called *museme wa yuso*, the word *yuso* indicating the pattern worked on it with gaily coloured threads, made from a sisal fibre called *lukushi*, which are bound together in squares or rectangles to form various arrangements of diaper patterns.

Another type of mat making, which is strictly mat 'weaving', is carried on by forest-dwellers from among the immigrant tribes. The fibre used is a species of sisal obtained from a wild type of aloe. This plant grows in large quantities in certain forest areas and is gathered while still green so that the fibre may be extracted. The plant is dried and beaten until the fine inner fibres are separated from the outside cover of the leaf. These are then spun into threads by hand. The method of spinning is very simple. A few threads are first twisted together, and then they are rolled several times on the thigh. Some threads are then dyed, the dyes being produced from tree bark, leaves, or roots. The natural colours chiefly produced are: red, yellow, ochre, purple, and black. Some, to-day, use old type-writer ribbons and carbons to produce dyes, but the most sympathetic colours are those which the villagers produce from their own local recipes.

Groups of villagers around the Barotse plain and along some of the tributary river valleys specialize in this mat weaving. Strips of gaily coloured fabric are woven with geometric patterns worked in different colours. The designs used are largely variations of the zigzag patterns found on the wicker basket work. Many of the pieces of fabric produced are used to make backs for deck chairs, but some villagers are beginning to make strips of carpeting, and some very attractive round mats.

The method of weaving is very simple indeed, and in fact might more truly be called plaiting. Warp threads are stretched out between wooden pegs stuck in the ground, and the woof threads are threaded through by hand. There is no evidence that the makers know anything about loom weaving, though it is a village craft which could well be adapted to the loom. The better types of workman use sisal threads for both warp and woof threads, but the less careful is satisfied with using somewhat rough warp threads made from a fibre already mentioned, *mashandi*. Mats or fabrics made in the latter way are not nearly so finely finished as those made solely from sisal fibre.

How long fabrics and mats have been made from this material it is not easy to say—perhaps not much longer than the period of

known European contact with the province. However, the people have long known the use of the fibre itself, and it is used, and seems to have been used in the past, for a variety of other articles. Women use it to decorate reed mats, and it is also used for making patterned bindings for brooms and in some types of basket work.

It is perhaps surprising that despite their industrial skill in so many directions the Barotse tribes have very little knowledge, if any, of spinning and weaving cloth. Coillard has remarked on the passionate fondness of the Barotse people for clothes, and when Serpa Pinto first reached Lealui in the first half of the nineteenth century he found all the chiefs dressed in faded Portugese uniforms. The favourite costume of Coillard's day consisted of a pair of trousers, a shirt, rather long and worn outside, and a waist-coat. The waist-coat was most desired because it was considered to 'pull together and support the figure'. Yet despite the love of clothes which was present long before any missionary influence, they had no knowledge of weaving cloth. They know how to spin in a very crude way. To-day some men still make what are called *makabi*, a small apron of spun threads sewn on to a leather belt which is worn by little girls. They use locally grown cotton spun into threads on a very primitive distaff. This seems to be the extent of their use of cotton, and of their knowledge of spinning.

Hat Weaving: Another local skill which has been limited by environment is that of hat weaving. Many of the plain-dwellers are very clever at weaving straw hats from another species of palm fibre, called *linzalu* locally, which is found solely on the Barotse plain. Weaving such hats requires skill and dexterity, as well as patience. The hats are woven in two pieces, beginning first with the brim. Then the crown is woven, and the two parts are skillfully joined so that the joining is invisible. The degree of dexterity and patience required can be gauged from the fact that there are no less than 680 separate strands of fibre used at one time.

While many people know this craft to-day, it is doubtful if it is a village craft which goes back very far into the past. Coillard does not mention it, but rather indicates that the Barotse people of his day were more fond of a cotton cap, or a piece of coloured cloth wound round the head like a turban. Perhaps, since the craft is confined to the plain-dwellers, and since the palm fibre used grows only on the plain, it was learned from slaves brought in from elsewhere to herd cattle in the days of Lewanika. It is even to-day a craft well suited to fill in idle moments while herding cattle.

Skin Dressing: A village craft which obviously does go back into the past is that of skin dressing. Early visitors to Barotseland were impressed with the quality of the dressed skins found there. To-day many of the people know this art and can produce skins which are remarkably soft and well cured. The men who carry out the craft say that much of the skill was learned from the Kololo. Prior to the Kololo Invasion, people used skins, but some maintain that these were

undressed skins worn as many of the more primitive Wiko of to-day wear them—that is, in the form of a skirt, roughly fastened together with the tails of the animals hanging downwards. Some of the older men say that it was the Kololo who taught them how to use sour milk and other fats in the softening process, and that from the same source they learned how to sew skins together. It was the Kololo, they say, who taught them how to use the metal awl which they now use and which gives a finer finish to a sewn skin than is achieved with the conventional needle.

The technique of skin dressing to-day is as follows. After the flayed skin has been sun-dried, the first task is to remove the remnants of tissue and dried fat which still adhere. The skin is pegged out dry with small wooden pegs on to a layer of grass. The workman kneels or squats on the ground and scrapes the skin clean with an axe. The skin is then damped with water, and the second process begins. This consists of rubbing in the softening agent. Some use sour milk, others a mixture of monkey nut oil, salt and flour, others the bark of the *mutuya* tree. The agent is applied to the pegged-out skin and is worked into the skin by light rubbing, either with part of the jaw bone of a buck or with a collection of metal spikes, or needles, which is called *mulalatali*. After this comes the final process of rubbing the inside of the skin together vigourously with the hands.

After the softening comes the joining of the skins. The thread used is produced by the worker from muscle fascia, usually taken from cattle. The fascia is stripped and then rolled into threads much in the same way as threads are made from sisal fibre. The technique of sewing seems laborious and slow, but the results achieved by a good workman amply justify the long time it may take. First a hole is made in the two parts to be joined, and the thread is placed singly through this hole. The needle or awl has a very fine point, and when the thread has been pushed through it is looped, threaded again through the loop and pulled through in the form of a blanket stitch. The result of this somewhat painstaking method is remarkably neat, and the skins thus joined lie flat and close to each other. An average of twenty stitches to the inch can be obtained by the good workman, and in the course of an eight-hour day he can finish about four feet of such sewing. Much time is wasted, however, since many of the skins used rub into holes and this involves much patching. It is not so much the process of the softening that produces the holes as the lack of skill in flaying the skin from the dead animal. The fact is, however, that at the moment much of the worker's time and skill goes in matching and patching these holes.

The skins worked are chiefly those of wild buck, wild cat, and a species of skunk, which are usually made up into rugs and blankets. Cowhides do not appear to be softened, probably because of the great labour involved. Lozi workmen, who are the principal skin dressers, are capable of much finer work than many of them achieve; if given the chance they can, as has been proved by experiments, work with

skins of greater value than wild buck. They can produce results which compare favourably with those achieved by recognized furriers; and leopard skins and otter skins when they are worked under European instruction can be successfully softened and made into capes and coats.

Wood Work: Village crafts connected with the forest have played an important part in the life of the Barotse people in the past and to a certain extent still do. The hard wood forests in the south of the country provide the backbone of present-day revenue, and much of the internal economy of the country still depends on forest trades. In most villages one can still find wooden food bowls in daily use. The advent of enamel-ware has not altogether ousted the locally produced article. There is still a demand for paddles, stamping blocks, adzed timbers for hut building, and canoes.

Most of the wood work produced in Barotseland, however, is more utilitarian than artistic. The Barotse tribes are not clever wood carvers, at least not when their work is compared with some of the excellent carvings that can be found in East or West Africa. Many of the articles one sees in Livingstone or in other parts of the province are roughly finished and present a very conventional approach to the subject, whether it be animal or human.

In times past the bulk of wood carving seems to have been used for the decoration of wooden pots, or handles for ceremonial axes or hoes. Through some unknown and outside influence this has now changed, and one sees very few carved wooden pots or handles and a lot of carved animal figures which seem to be misnamed when they are called 'curios'. It may be that local people in the past were clever at modelling animals in clay, particularly the plain-dwellers, and that to-day this gift has been transferred to modelling in wood with not such good results. The best wood carvers, to-day at any rate, are chiefly plain dwellers; but out of many scores of wood carvers seen only one produces work which can in any true sense be called artistic.

Most carvings are produced from a local hard wood tree, called *mushakashale*, which when smoothed and polished has an attractive grain. The figures are produced by chopping at small blocks of wood with locally made tools, chisels and adzes. They are finished off with files and sand paper, and are polished usually with brown shoe polish.

Ivory Work: Ivory carving is in the same position as wood carving, and does not compare well with the products of other countries. A few men still produce small carved ivory replicas of animals and birds, though the best work is usually to be seen in the decorated handles of fly-switches. Ingenious, though not always beautiful, carvings are also produced from cow horn and hippo tooth.

Pottery: Many Lozi women are skilled in the art of pottery. This is a craft which, like many others, has been limited by environment, since the best clay for pot making is found only on the Barotse plain. Their method of pot making is that used by most primitive peoples, namely coil construction. The clay is rolled into strips which are placed on top of each other, while the potter shapes the vessel with

her hands, using often a shell to smooth over the clay. Most pots are made in two halves—the top half first, which is allowed to partly dry, when the vessel is inverted and the second half attached. None seem to have the idea or the ability to build up from the base and make the vessel all in one piece. The pots are then allowed to dry out after which they are burnt over an open fire.

Many pots are made to-day, especially in certain areas on the Barotse plain, and pots for particular uses—such as for storing water or making beer—are still in demand and have not been superseded by imported articles.

Iron Work: Iron work is largely the prerogative and specialization of the bush-dweller. The chief iron working tribes are to be found to the east of the Barotse plain and are principally, Kwanga people. Not only do they forge many implements still in local use and demand, but they also continue to smelt their own iron.

Many of the shallow depressions which are found in the bush contain deposits of iron stone which have a high mineral content. During the rainy season, when the ground is soft, this ore is mined and carried to the place where it is to be smelted, usually somewhere in the forest away from the village. A long trench is dug and filled with ore, which is then covered with charcoal previously produced from local trees of two varieties, either *musheshe* or *mubako*. At one end of the trench a long clay funnel is inserted in whose outer end are placed the bellows. Usually two pairs of bellows are used, since the work of keeping the charcoal alight and the heat intense, is arduous. The Kwanga use bellows made usually from softened buck skins, sewn together in the form of a bag, one bag being attached to each pipe, and the complete bellows comprising two pipes. The bellows are 'blown' with a downward pumping action, the fingers opening and closing with each downward movement. The process of smelting, as with many other primitive tribes, is a community effort, and the males of a smith's village all take part in the work.

A considerable amount of local iron smelting is carried out even to-day, despite the fact that large numbers of iron implements are imported. Many local people still prefer locally made hoes, and certainly most village men still use locally made knives and axes. One does not see a great deal of decorative iron work, yet it is here that the smith can show his work to great perfection. The ornamental hoe, *nalubeso*, sometimes carried by women when out visiting, is beautifully chased, as is also its counterpart, the *sibanga*, an ornamental axe used by men.

The smith works with a minimum of tools, usually all of his own making. His 'anvil' is a conical piece of solid iron, about three inches across at the top and half an inch at the bottom, which he drives into a log of wood to give it a firm base. His workshop is usually the nearest shady tree, and here, with perhaps one or two small hammers, a chisel, an adze, and a pair of tongs, he plies his trade. Here he will produce working axes and hoes, (or those for

ornaments only), fish spears with dangerous looking barbs, hunting spears, and he will carry out repairs to broken implements. He is an interesting character and it is fascinating to watch him at his work, which invariably he carries out with great skill and concentration.

Conclusion

What will be the future of some of these useful as well as interesting village crafts? Have they in fact a future, or are they merely part of a transient social order which will one day discard them?

In the past days the products of these village skills formed an essential part of the Lozi internal economy. Under the old system, as Dr. Gluckman points out, there was sufficient differential production and specialization to provide a wide economic system of barter and kinship and ruler-subject relationships with reciprocal rights. A complicated and widely variegated system of labour specialization therefore was found in central Barotseland, and there was frequent interchange of goods, the result of a variety of skills, between plain and bush. The bush had the iron and the wood, the poles and the bark ropes so much needed by the plain-dwellers. On the other hand, the plain had the cattle and the fish which the bush-dwellers needed to supplement the meagre amount of relish they could find locally. Consequently there developed a complex system of barter and exchange between the two spheres. Goods were exchanged through three different types of relationship: first between kinsmen and friends, then by barter with strangers, and also through tribute to the king and other political authorities.

Through a system of blood-brotherhood or friendship or kinship, obligations were imposed on both the Lozi and the proximate tribes which often resulted in a mutual exchange of goods or produce. Kwangwa people to the east might exchange iron work of many kinds, or mats and palm fibre baskets, with their friends or relatives on the plain, and receive in return fish or meat. Other tribes from the north might bring down canoes to exchange for cattle. There was also an exchange of goods between people who did not stand in any personal relationship to one another. There was an interchange of goods between the itinerant traveller, who might bring anything from beeswax to cooking pots or sleeping mats, and the plainsman whose principal currency was cattle, fish, or dressed skins.

The third method of distribution was by means of the tribute brought by the surrounding tribes to king and councillors. Dr. Gluckman suggests that within the plain area, in Bulozi proper, the Lozi gladly gave to the king, the royal family and the councillors, of their surplus. But in return they were importunate enough to beg both favours and goods. Outside the plain areas, by virtue of the authority which the Lozi held over the proximate tribes, all had to bring to the king the results of their specialities. Some brought *mashandi* for making fish nets; others, strong palm fibre baskets for storing grain; others, the small wicker baskets for keeping personal effects and small trinkets;

others would bring wooden food pots or stamping blocks, clay pots or dressed skins, iron work, mats, bark ropes, poles and planks. Of this great store of articles which came to the king he would distribute gifts, first to his family and councillors, and through them to the common people. Thus, Dr. Gluckman maintains, the political authorities, through their right to tribute and their obligation to give gifts, were a clearing house in an economy which necessitated an exchange but lacked a currency.

So it was that before the advent of a currency, of a cash economy, there was always a ready outlet and a secure position for the products of the various skills and crafts carried on in the villages. In other words it would seem that the crafts were carried on for more than merely utilitarian reasons. Professor Firth, in *Human Types*, suggests that the participation of primitive people in work is often undertaken as a duty towards the person who wants the work done, rather than for material gain. Work for its own sake, he suggests, is not regarded as a duty, and time with the primitive is not as important an element as with us. This is certainly true where some of the Barotse crafts are concerned.

Under the old system, where time did not count, and where an article had perhaps a greater and more significant value than its mere 'face' value, it did not matter how long a man took to produce a mat or a hoe. Under the new system, however, where the cliche 'time is money' is bound sooner or later to make itself heard, time is an important factor, and the future of many of these village crafts depends on whether they can be successfully adapted to this new situation. Some of them can be adapted, but it is perhaps outside their native sphere—that is, outside Barotseland—that they will find anything like their real worth in terms of cash. Among the local people the products of the various village crafts still value in the old terms. A man will refuse to work for the European for less than a shilling a day; yet, when asked how much he thinks a mat is worth which has taken ten full working days to produce, he says 'about four shillings'.

It is possible that, while many of the crafts remain alive and while there are people present who know how to carry them out with skill and perfection, the new valuation can be achieved, and that they can be given a secure place in the future economy and social life of Barotseland.

READING HABITS IN A PART OF THE MUSHIRI RESERVE

by

A Rhodes-Livingstone Institute Research Team

THIS report is based on the results of a survey conducted during the period 22 to 30 November 1950. The survey was conducted in conjunction with a sociological study which was made primarily for the training of an anthropologist and four African Assistants.³⁹

Questionnaires were completed for all adults in ten villages. The sex, age, education and religious persuasion of all interviewees were recorded together with data on the languages which they could read and whether they read newspapers and books.

We submit this analysis with some misgivings since we are aware of its shortcomings. Nevertheless, we feel that with the dearth of information on this topic the analysis we present will help to confirm impressions others may have, though it cannot on its own refute them. We emphasize, however, that it cannot be the basis of planning. The most we hope for is that it should indicate some future lines of enquiry.

The Area: All of the ten villages are in what is called the Old Area of the Mushiri reserve, i.e. north of the Kasulafuta and south of the Kafubu Rivers. All these villages lay between the Kafulafuta and Fiwale Mission stations. The ten villages studied were chosen casually from a list submitted to us by the chief. We have no reason to believe that they are not typical, but we hesitate to generalize from these villages for the whole of the reserve.

The Extent of Literacy: In all, 165 persons were interviewed. Table I sets out the proportions of literate and illiterates among the males and females.

TABLE I. PROPORTIONS ILLITERATE AND LITERATE :
MALES AND FEMALES

	Illit.	Lit.a*	Sub A & B	Std. I	Std. II	Std. III	Std. IV	Total
Males	49	5	8	6	2	3	1	74
Females	74	3	5	6	3	—	—	91
Totals	123	8	13	12	5	3	1	165
Percentages								
Males	66.2	6.7	10.8	8.1	2.7	4.1	1.4	100.0
Females	81.3	3.3	5.5	6.6	3.3	—	—	100.0

a*By 'literate' we mean 'Those who have been taught to read without going to school'.

³⁹ Those who took part in the survey were Dr. J. C. Mitchell, Messrs. V. W. Turner, D. Sianga, S. Ndilila, and B. Chapasuka all of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute and Mr. I. Kalima, Assistant Welfare Officer on the staff of the United Missions on the Copperbelt.

It is clear from this table that the great majority of adults living in these villages are illiterate (123 of 165 or 74.5 per cent.). It is clear also that there are roughly twice as many males literate as females (33.8 per cent. against 18.7 per cent.) a difference, however, which may possibly have arisen by chance in view of the smallness of the sample (C.R.—2.2: $p = 0.03$).⁴¹ It should not be forgotten that more men who are literate may be away at the towns so that the difference between the sexes in literacy may in fact be greater.⁴² We have insufficient data to test this hypothesis.

Literacy by Religion: In order to ascertain whether there was any association between type of religion on one hand and literacy on the other hand we constructed Table II. In this table we have classified our sample into illiterate, semi-literate, i.e. those who have taught themselves to read together with those who reached Sub-A and Sub-B in their education, and, lastly, literate, which are those who reached Standard 1 or above in their education. There are arbitrary divisions with no meaning outside our particular purpose of establishing or refuting the association.

TABLE II. LITERACY BY RELIGION : MALES AND FEMALES

Religion	Males		Total			Females		Total F	Total
	Illit.	S-Lit.	Lit.	M.	Illit.	S-Lit.	Lit.		
Pagan	23	4	4	31	27	3	1	31	62
Free Church	12	5	2	19	22	4	4	30	49
Watchtower	6	1	2	9	17	—	—	17	26
7th Day Adventist	5	1	4	10	8	—	4	12	22
Roman Catholic	3	2	—	5	—	—	—	—	5
Moslem	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Total	49	13	12	74	74	8	9	91	165

In broad terms, if we classify the semi-literates as literate we may adduce that a slightly greater proportion of Christians were literate than non-Christians (29 of 102 or 28.4 per cent. against 13 of 63 or 20.6 per cent.), a difference which in view of the smallness of the sample has no significance (C.R.—1.1; $p = 0.27$). Within the sexes there were differences in literacy by religion. Thus 39.5 per cent. (17 of 43) of Christian males were literate and 25.8 per cent. (8 of 31)

⁴¹ This is the Critical Ratio. Briefly it is a statistic which indicates the possibility with which a difference as great as that shown may have occurred merely by chance. With a critical ratio of 1.0 the difference may have arisen 32 times in 100 studies, with a critical ratio of 2.0, 4.5 times in 100 studies; with a critical ratio of 3.0, about 3 times in 1,000 studies. The figure shown after the symbol 'p' is the probability that the difference may have arisen by chance, i.e. $p = 0.03$ means that the difference may have occurred by chance 3 times in 100 attempts.

⁴² Note that there were 1.2 women to every man in the total sample population and in the working ages, i.e. 20-60 it was 1.4 : 1.0.

of non-Christians males were so. On the other hand there was little difference between the percentage of literates among Christians and non-Christian females (15.6 per cent. or 5 of 32 non-Christian literates against 20.3 per cent. or 12 of 59 Christian literates). Once again we should not be ready to accept these differences with any confidence because of the smallness of the sample. Thus we cannot draw valid conclusions from the differences in literacy among the different denominations. If we exclude the Roman Catholics, of whom there were only 5, and the Moslem, the percentages of literates, both male and female, among the different denominations are as follows:—

	Total	Literate	Percentage
			Literate
Seventh Day Adventists	22	9	40.9
Free Churches	49	15	30.6
Pagans	62	12	19.4
Watchtower	26	3	11.5

The series of figures is suggestive. The difference between the Seventh Day Adventists and the Watchtowers is large enough to approach significance (C.R. = 2.3 : P = 0.02) but yet not large enough for us to draw a definite conclusion. The progressive tendency of the Seventh Day Adventists have been noted before⁴³ while the generally reactionary attitude of the Watchtower adherents is well known.

Literacy by Age: There is, as we may expect, a significant difference between the proportion of literates among the young against that among the old. Table III sets out the numbers of literate and illiterate among the different age groups.

TABLE III. LITERACY BY AGE. MALES AND FEMALES

Ages	Males		Total	M.	Illit.	Females		Total	Total
	Illit.	S.-lit.				S.-lit.	Lit.		
Under 20	6	4	2	12	4	1	3	8	20
20-29	4	2	5	11	12	3	4	19	30
30-39	13	1	3	17	18	1	2	21	38
40-49	7	1	1	9	17	1	—	18	27
50-59	7	2	—	9	8	—	—	8	17
60 and over	12	2	—	14	14	2	1	16	30
Unknown	—	1	1	2	1	—	—	1	3
Total	49	13	12	74	74	8	9	91	165

We may re-arrange the figures in Table III in such a way to bring out the most conspicuous feature (Table IIIa)

⁴³ See Allan, Gluckman, Peters and Trapnell. *Land Holding and Land Usage among the Plateau Tonga*. Rhodes-Livingstone Institute Paper No. 14, where the preponderance of the Seventh Day Adventists among the growing class of capitalist farmers was noted.

TABLE IIIa: LITERACY BY AGE. MALES AND FEMALES

Ages	Total	Lit.	Males		Lit.	Females		Total	
			Per cent.	Total		Per cent.	Total	Per cent.	Per cent.
Under 20	12	6	50.0	8	4	50.0	20	10	50.0
20-29	11	7	63.3	19	7	36.8	30	14	46.7
30-39	17	4	23.5	21	3	14.3	38	7	18.4
40-49	9	2	22.2	18	1	5.6	27	3	11.1
50-59	9	2	22.2	8	0	0.0	17	2	11.8
60 and over	14	2	14.3	16	2	12.5	30	4	13.3

There can be little doubt but that the younger people are more literate. Thus 35.2 per cent. of those under 40 (the approximate mean age of the population) i.e. 31 of 88, are literate, whereas only 9 of 74 of those over 40 or 12.2 are literate. This difference can hardly have arisen by chance (C.R. = 3.4 : p = 0.0007). Of the total number of literates whose ages we knew (40), twenty-four or 60.0 per cent. were under the age of thirty and 31 or 77.5 per cent. under the age of 40.

Reading Habits: The reading habits of the people in the reserve are illuminated by the comments of those who cannot or who will not read. A small minority had made some comment in response to questioning on why they were not literate. Most of these, particularly the old women had said that they had never had time to learn to read while some other old women maintained with some justification that there had been no school in their days. One young woman of 30, who was a member of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, said that she had had no one to send her to school since her father had died while she was young. One old woman of 62, who was a member of the Free Church, said that she was foolish not to have gone to school. A woman of 28, also a member of the Watchtower Society, said that she could read once but had now forgotten everything. In general the apathy to reading was obvious.

Of the 21 who were semi-literate only 11 maintained that they read regularly. Of these 5 were at school; 10 were able to read but did not do so, 7 of these stating specifically that they were not interested in doing so.

The languages which were read by the semi-literates were as follows :

Bemba-Lala-Lamba	4
Bemba-Lala-Lamba, Nyanja and Nsenga	1
Bemba-Lala-Lamba and English	1

There were only 2 amongst this group who said that they read newspapers (*Mutende*); 5 of the 6 maintained that they read the Bible more often than anything else, and all five possessed a copy. One man read *Kisimikisyo* most frequently and stated that he did so because he liked the story.

Of the 21 whom we have classified as literate (i.e. passed Standard I or above) 11 did not read regularly. One of these had read *Kisimikisyo* in the past because 'he liked the story', but maintained that nowadays he 'read nothing at all—not even *Mutende*'. Of the rest, 2 were still at school, 5 read the Scriptures most frequently, 1 read only *Mutende*, 1 *Kisimikisyo*, and 1 *King Khama*. Of the 8 people in the group, 6 said that they were read *Mutende*, in striking contrast to the 2 among the 6 semi-literate. Excluding the 2 who were still at school, the interviewees claimed to be able to speak the following languages :—

Bemba-Lala-Lamba	5
Bemba-Lala-Lamba and Nyanja	1
Bemba-Lala-Lamba and English	2

Most of those who read the Scriptures more frequently than anything else had bought them at the Kafulafuta Mission. The person who read *Kisimikisyo* had been given it by his teacher who had also recommended it. Teachers were also mentioned as being those who had suggested the reading of the Scripture, though one mentioned a friend, and a woman mentioned her husband who, though he himself was illiterate, had given her a copy of the Bible. Quite a typical was the young man of twenty whose favourite book was *King Khama*. He had reached Standard 11 in his education and belonged to the Free Church. He was very interested in King Khama and his ideas and had recently bought a copy of *The History of Northern Rhodesia*, with the object of following up his interest in the past.

Summary and Conclusions

1. Of persons over the age of fifteen, 165 were interviewed in the Old Area of the Mushiri (Lamba) Reserve.
2. Seventy-five per cent, were illiterate, and twice as many women as men were illiterate.
3. There was practically no difference between Christians and non-Christians as far as literacy went.
4. More young people were literate than old.
5. While some of the illiterate were ashamed of their inability to read most were apathetic about it.
6. Of those who could read, by far most used their ability to read only in connection with religious worship. Only one had read to improve his knowledge.

In general this analysis of what data we have on reading habits suggests that there is still a large back-log of illiteracy in the rural areas and that many of those who could read in the past do not retain this faculty but allow it to lapse. It suggests also that most of those who do read do not use their ability outside religious observance and newspaper reading. Except for the one individual who was interested in history, the only other book read consistently was *Kisimikisyo*.

MODERN INFLUENCES UPON AN AFRICAN LANGUAGE GROUP

by

C. M. N. WHITE

Synopsis

The diverse effects of the outer world upon modern Africa in the social sphere are well known and have been much studied; but little has been written upon the effects of modern influences on African languages. Some of these effects are here considered, distinguishing the interaction of languages where the speakers are living in close proximity in their villages in the Balovale and Kabompo districts of Northern Rhodesia, the effects of contact with other Bantu languages through migrant labour or trade, and the effect of contact with European Languages. The different incidence of the various influences is considered. Attention is drawn to the effect of modern influences upon the use of the ideophone. The study of these changes is of more than purely linguistic interest and it would be valuable to have studies of such situations from many areas.

ONE of the outstanding features of modern Africa is the great impact which it has experienced from contact with the outer world. So far as this has affected Central Africa one may cite among its causes the coming of the Europeans—the Portuguese began the process in the late fifteenth century in Angola—and the development of industrialization with its attendant factors. Chief amongst the latter is the phenomenon of migrant labour especially produced by the Rand, mines in Southern Rhodesia such as Wankie, the coppermines of Northern Rhodesia, the Union Miniere in the Katanga, and the diamond mines in Angola and the Belgian Congo. There has also arisen an extensive demand for labour on account of railways, building, motor transport, urban settlement, and farming. Yet a further factor has been contributed by modern administration in British territories, at least, with its growth of African local government, which, though commenced upon a foundation of indigenous institutions, has quickly found it necessary to develop far beyond such institutions in order to create modern machinery for financial responsibility, departmental officials, and a growing system of democratic representation. Over all looms the fact that with these changes there has been introduced a moneyed economy, while a primary feature of European administration has been the substitution of peace for tribal wars and the slave trade.

Much has been written on the changes which have been wrought in the social structure of the people involved in them, though little has been said of changes in the linguistic sphere. Yet, just as society is essentially dynamic and reacts to external influences, so the language of a people is as much a part of social life as kinship structure, religious beliefs, or agricultural practices. It would indeed be strange if language remained immutable in the midst of otherwise almost universal change. An interesting indication of the field for study in this sphere is provided by S. Comhaire-Sylvain's 'Le Lingala des enfants noirs de Leopoldville' in *Kongo-Overzee* (15.5.239-50, 1949), and the Bemba of the Northern Rhodesian copperbelt is likely to prove of great interest when a study of its developments is made. Although in both these cases urban areas are involved, it must be remembered that, despite a growing tendency to urban stabilization, the basic feature of migrant labour at the moment is that it is migrant, and that whatever trends evolve in the urban centres are therefore taken back to the rural areas to influence conditions there. It is not, therefore, sufficient merely to say that, although a language undergoes changes under urban conditions the rural areas retain their languages unaffected, and the urban changes are merely a degeneration of the pure 'classical' form. The present notes are an attempt to contribute something to the meagre data on this topic from a rural area in the north west of Northern Rhodesia (the Balovale and Kabompo districts).

A feature of these districts is that not only is the population strongly affected by migrant labour, but that it consists of Lunda, Lwena, Luchazi and Chokwe living in close association together, while a considerable part of the population has entered British territory from Angola in comparatively recent years. Language has therefore been affected in more than one way.

Of the languages spoken by the four tribes mentioned, it may be said that Lwena shows the greatest tendencies to spread and impose itself upon the others. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that it is the simplest of the four and has much in common with Chokwe and Luchazi. It has, therefore, increasingly become, with little opposition, the *lingua franca* of these three groups. All three tribes exhibit a comparatively keen interest in trade, and their commercial activities have facilitated the process. The effect upon Lunda has been most marked in the sphere of vocabulary; and, despite a tolerably strong feeling of Lunda tribalism, the Lunda language has shown itself increasingly incapable of resisting the infiltration of Lwena words. It is interesting to observe that of these some of the commonest are :

- (a) The adoption of the conjunction *kachi* to introduce unfulfilled conditional clauses, and corresponding tendency to drop the use of the Lunda equivalents *asi* and *mutenou*.
- (b) The almost universal use of the general conjunction *kaha* (so, then, next), a word of rather general significance, and perhaps not perfectly paralleled by any Lunda equivalent.

- (c) The common adoption of *vene* (indeed, very—a general emphatic).
- (d) The almost universal adoption of the numeral *-wana* (four) in place of *-ni*.

It is a matter of interest that these examples, which represent certainly some of the most widespread adoptions from Lwena, are none of them words which could be described as illustrating cultural contact in the material sphere, though conceivably the last has been helped by a moneyed economy with the Lwena speakers playing a dominant role in the economic sphere. The other three have little inherent in them to suggest reasons for their rapid absorption. It is also perhaps a matter for comment that it is in the realm of vocabulary and not of grammatical structure that Lunda has been influenced by Lwena. In the phonetic sphere the absence of any flapped sound in the Lunda 'l' accords well with the absence of flapping of this consonant in Lwena, and contrasts with the more marked flapped consonant heard in Lunda areas away from Lwena influences.

If Lunda is well known to have been thus strongly influenced by Lwena, it is certainly the general view that a converse influence upon Lwena from Lunda is not appreciable, though in my experience it can be traced. A few illustrations may be quoted.

(a) Use of the *ka-* possessive concord with *mwana*: strict Lwena would require *mwana mukwetu* (my friend's child), Lunda construction is *mwana kamukwetu*. The latter however is commonly heard by Lwena speakers in Balovale.

(b) In Lunda the prefix *lu-* of certain nouns is tending to be lost. In my experience the same process is observable in Lwena at Balovale, though it would not appear to be marked in pure Lwena speaking areas.

(c) The use of a subjunctive of *-di* (to be) in the sense of not being wanted, e.g., *chadi*, I don't want it (lit. let it be) is a typical Lunda construction. The same construction is common enough with Lwena *—li*, though Mr. A. E. Horton, a missionary in a Lwena area of Angola, tells me that he would reject it as a borrowing from Lunda.

These examples of Lwena acquisitions from Lunda, it will be noted, have a very fortuitous appearance. They are none of them influences from the sphere of material culture, any more than were some of the commonest Lunda borrowings cited above. On both sides there is an impression that the causes for the acquisitions lie rather in the psychological attractiveness of certain turns of speech than in obviously explicable reasons.

Thus far, instances have been of interaction between the two languages; but before considering clearly foreign influences, it may be well to turn attention to one or two other features which are commonly regarded as 'Anglicisms', though this may be a rather misleading term to apply.

(a) Constructions with *likumi* (ten); this is of course a noun and not an enumerative stem. It is commonly, indeed I should say almost

universally to-day among the younger generation, constructed as *lykumi lyamitondo* (ten trees)—i.e. as a possessive construction. Mr. Horton has expressed the view that good Lwena would construct *mitondo likumi*, and this view is supported in that the latter construction is the more usual certainly in Lunda.

(b) There is good reason for saying that Lwena does not accept a negative verb tense in a relative clause, but uses a periphrasis with an auxiliary verb meaning to omit, fail to do, etc. Nevertheless such expressions as *etu katwayileko* (we who did not go) are very commonly heard to-day.

It may well be that these new modes of expression have sprung from European influences, though the use of them certainly does not indicate that the speaker himself has any knowledge of English, nor would it seem likely that the handful of Europeans in the area could be said to have exerted such marked direct influence upon African speech. That this represents the 'new' Lwena one readily admits, but I doubt if these changing speech habits are rightly to be styled 'Anglicisms'.

All these speech changes are of more than merely academic interest; these languages have still very little literature, and therefore the spoken word is determining the development of the language without the aid of a written form to fix a standard, printed usage. Translation work, largely confined to the New Testament, has taken a conservative line in its renderings, a course which is, I think, wise. But the trends which I have briefly indicated serve to remind one that a language is not static; quite apart from the sphere of importations from outside about which there is more room for debate, the changes described above can be called internal changes which are taking place. For that reason I would venture to make a plea that under such conditions, writers of grammars or vocabularies do not ignore such developments as may conflict with the 'classical' form of a language. This plea is not directed against writers who have done so, but is intended to draw attention to the desirability of recording what is changing, and the danger of laying down rules to which human beings should adhere, but which in fact they regularly violate. This has a very direct bearing upon the development of a literature in Bantu languages, where the habits of the readers have an important psychological effect upon the sales of a book. It is a subject we know little about, and needs documentation both as a record for linguistic studies, and as of practical importance now that African Literature Bureaus and similar bodies are coming into being.

The other aspect of change is a more familiar one, that of foreign acquisitions from outside. Professor C. M. Doke (*Textbook of Lamba Grammar*, pp. 401-404) has described and listed such acquisitions for Lamba. A similar process has certainly affected every language in Central Africa. One may perhaps draw an artificial distinction between other Bantu influences and non-Bantu influences in this sphere. To some extent the foregoing account of linguistic

interaction could of course be placed in the former category, but it is, I think, useful to draw a distinction because the Lunda-Lwena interchange discussed above is of a more intimate nature within the same district or even village and not the product of long distance contacts. Acquisitions from other Bantu languages have, on the contrary, only been acquired outside ordinary village life.

As far as acquisition from outside Bantu sources are concerned, one's first impression is the very small extent to which these occur. The proximity of the Lozi, with whom the Balovale tribes have extensive trading contacts, has produced hardly any obvious Lozi words imported into the languages. *Chitole*—a heifer (Lozi,—*sitole*) is often quoted though it is not in my experience a very commonly used word; and *mubusisi* (a European official) is more commonly heard though less often cited. The Swahili used in the Katanga labour centres certainly outweighs Lozi as a source of foreign Bantu words with *-tumika* (to work), *ndeke* (aeroplane), and *-tekenyesa* (drive vehicle) as fairly widespread examples. Horton (*A Grammar of Luvale*, pp. 416-17) quotes a few illustrations from Umbundu which are not entirely convincing since, for example, *mbambe* (duiker) is the only Luchazi word for duiker and might equally have reached Lwena from that source. The copperbelt has not, I think, produced any Bemba or Nyanja words which could be described as commonly used. It may be said that, despite the large amount of migrant labour from this area to the copperbelt, the number of individuals who acquire any proficiency in speaking Bemba is very small, a fact which has often been commented upon both by Bemba-speaking Africans stationed at Balovale and Kabompo and by officials who speak Bemba. It seems clear therefore that outside foreign Bantu acquisitions have thus far played a very minor part in influencing the languages in question.

Of foreign European acquisitions, by far the greater part has come from Portuguese via Angola: I have a list of some three hundred such words which could be said to be universally understood and in common use. As one would expect, the bulk of these are words from the sphere of material culture such as *chikalasau* (*calcas*—trousers); *!ololo* (*relógio*—clock); *njapau* (*sabão*—soap); *kamboi* (*comboio*—railway train). But the presence of verbs like *-keshala* (*queixar*—complain), *-pashala* (*passear*—stroll), and *-mbeja* (*beijar*—kiss) shows that Portuguese has enriched the languages well outside the sphere of mere material objects. Both English and French can only claim a handful of introductions by contrast (*taimi*—time; *fwosholo*—shovel; and *fwalanga*—franc—used for any coin). Despite the labour which goes to the mines, from the Rand to the copperbelt, Afrikaans cannot be said to have added any words in universal use, whilst Kitchen Kaffir has not managed to influence the language as one might expect.

One is thus presented by an interesting contrast; casual contacts provided by migrant labour, deeply rooted as this habit is, have played a remarkably small role in affecting the Balovale languages. The

really strong influences have come from longer and more personal contacts. Lunda and Lwena have influenced each other, albeit in unequal degrees, from their constant association in the rural areas. Portuguese with its long established presence in Angola, and often indirectly via other languages like Umbundu to the west, and the general effect of Portuguese assimilating policy have likewise had a strong influence. The more recent and more aloof influences of English and French have, by contrast, had a feeble and much more restricted effect.

One further feature seems worthy of comment—the decay of the ideophone. It is, I think, an indisputable fact to-day in this area that, so far as the younger people are concerned, the ideophone is much more a feature of female than of male speech. I should ascribe this to migrant labour which, overall, affects males more than females and leads to a constant use of badly spoken 'foreign' languages in which the ideophone is superfluous. European influence as a whole gives no encouragement to the use of the ideophone, which is unintelligible to most Europeans and little used even by Lwena-speaking or Lunda-speaking Europeans. This effect is a matter for regret, for the vividness of the ideophone could do much to infuse life into vernacular literature, which in all Central African Bantu languages makes little use of it. A contrary view might be that the ideophone belongs peculiarly to the realm of the spoken word, though I should not personally agree.

The foregoing notes may serve to draw attention to a process which has been little discussed, but which is essentially one of the facets of the changing face of Africa. A statistical analysis of individuals based upon age and habits of life would have been desirable but would have to be elaborated to yield any very satisfactory results; and time has not been available to undertake it. Even without this, enough has been said, it is hoped, to draw attention to the need for more research in this neglected field which is not merely of linguistic interest but of general sociological significance.

NOTES AND REVIEWS

Editorship of the Journal.—Since the founding of the Rhodes-Livingstone Journal, *Human Problems in British Central Africa*, Dr. J. M. Winterbottom has been one of its editors. The Journal owes much to his critical mind and keen appreciation of the problems of Central Africa. It is with great regret that we announce Dr. Winterbottom's resignation as co-editor. He resigned from the Northern Rhodesian Civil Service in June 1950, and expects henceforth to work and live in the Union of South Africa. It will be difficult to replace him, both as an editor and as a frequent contributor to the Journal.

Northern Rhodesia Society.—The Northern Rhodesia Society has been formed with the object of attracting the attention of the ordinary citizen of the Territory to the fascination of all phases of life in Northern Rhodesia and of promoting its study. A major activity of the Society will be to publish the Northern Rhodesia Journal which is to appear twice a year. It will be well illustrated and each number will contain six to eight articles as well as smaller features. Its policy is to publish articles on any subject of interest to Northern Rhodesians; and history, natural history, memoirs, sociology, and current developments will all be covered. The Journal will be supplied free to members of the Society, who will, in addition, have the privilege of borrowing books from the Rhodes-Livingstone Museum Library, and of attending meetings and discussions of the Society which will be held in the main towns. The Headquarters of the Society will be at the Rhodes-Livingstone Museum, Livingstone.

Subscriptions to the society are of two types: ordinary membership, 15s. per annum, which entitles the member to receive the journal, borrow from the Library and attend meetings; and Associate Membership, which entitles the member to the use of the Library for reference only and to attend the meetings. The Society and the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute have agreed to offer lower subscription rates to any member of one body who joins the other. Thus a subscribing member of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute may join the Northern Rhodesian Society and receive all benefits of membership at the special rate of 10s. per annum. A member of the Northern Rhodesia Society may join the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute at 15s. per annum.

Those who are interested in joining the Society or in learning further of its programme should write to the Secretary, Northern Rhodesia Society, Rhodes-Livingstone Museum, Livingstone, Northern Rhodesia.

Research Staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.—The Trustees of the Institute have offered research posts to Dr. Marion Pearsall, Mr. V. W. Turner, and Mr. L. H. Gann. Mr. Turner reached Northern Rhodesia in September 1950, and has begun his work among the

Lunda of the Balovale and Mwinilunga Districts. Dr. Pearsall reached Northern Rhodesia in April 1951, and then began her work among the Lake-side Tonga of Nyasaland. Both are social anthropologists and will work along the lines developed by the Institute in its studies of Lozi, Tonga, Fort Jameson Ngoni, Yao, Shona, Ndepele, and Luapula peoples. Mr. Gann will be engaged on a history of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, since the first beginnings of European penetration into the area, so as to provide an authoritative account of the history of this portion of Central Africa. He began work in October on material available in England, and in April 1951, reached Rhodesia. He will work largely with the material collected in the Central African Archives at Salisbury.

Secretary of the Institute.—Mrs. A. Close, who had served the Institute as Secretary from October 1948, resigned her post in August 1950. Miss M. B. Hyam, of Broken Hill, has been appointed as Administrative Secretary.

BOOK REVIEW

A Demographic Survey of the British Colonial Empire, Vol. II. Robert Rene Kuczynski, Oxford University Press, London. 1949. pp. x, 983 at 75s.

This is the second volume in a series issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. The first volume, published in 1946, dealt with the West African territories. The second volume which is here reviewed deals with the South Africa High Commission Territories, East Africa (including Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland), and Mauritius and the Seychelles. Kuczynski died on the 25th of November 1947 while seeing the proofs of the second volume through the press, but the other two volumes in the series had been almost completed on his death. Volume III deals with America, the Atlantic and Oceania; Volume IV with Europe and Asia.

No happier choice could have been made than Kuczynski for the task of surveying the demographic information on the British Colonial empire. Robert Rene Kuczynski established his position in the history of demography when he published *The Balance of Births and Deaths* in 1931, and later (1936) the development of these ideas in *The Measurement of Population Growth*. It was in these works that Kuczynski applied and popularized the measure known as the nett reproduction rate, which has recently become a widely used measure of population trends.⁴⁴ Kuczynski was born in Germany and went to the United States in 1926. In 1935 he joined the staff of the University of London, where he was Reader in Demography until he retired from academic life in 1941.⁴⁵ It was while he was in London that his interest in the demographic problems of the Colonies developed. He published a booklet *Colonial Populations* in 1937⁴⁶ and *The*

⁴⁴ Apparently the nett reproduction rate was invented by Boeckh in Germany in 1884 and, independently, by the General Registry Office for England and Wales in 1926. See *Reports and Selected Papers of the Statistics Committee, Volume II* of the papers of the Royal Commission on Population. London. H.M.S.O. (1950). p. 6; but the measures only became widely used after Kuczynski had popularized them and shown how they could be used.

⁴⁵ I am indebted to Irene B. Taeuber's review of volumes I and II of *A Demographic Survey of the British Colonial Empire* in *The American Sociological Review* xv, 4 (Aug. 1950) for the biographic information on Kuczynski.

⁴⁶ A part of this work, together with a chapter from *Population Movements*, another of his booklets, was reprinted as 'Population Movements: the Contribution of Demography to the Study of Social Problems' in *Human Problems in British Central Africa* (Rhodes-Livingstone Journal No. 2), Dec. 1944, pp. 16-34. I recommend this to those who are interested in population problems in the Colonies. It sets out Kuczynski's attitude very clearly.

Cameroons and Togoland in 1939. Shortly after his retirement from academic life, Kuczynski became Demographic Adviser to the Colonial Office, so that during the time that he was preparing these volumes on colonial populations he was in close contact with the problem.

To review this volume adequately would take up considerable space and would serve no useful purpose. Here there are over 900 pages of close printing, statistical tables, meticulous argument, and many bibliographic references. It is possible to meet Kuczynski only in respect of a very small portion of the territory he surveys, and that is where one's special knowledge can compete with his astonishing breadth of reading and clear grasp of the published information. As Dr. Teuber says : 'To review the massive volumes in detail . . . would require a competence possessed only by their author'.

Consequently, I shall confine my remarks to the sections on Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. One hundred and twenty pages (about 68,000 words) are devoted to Northern Rhodesia, a fact which must surprise those who view pessimistically its population statistics, though one may argue, I suppose, that the less there is on the Territory the more comment one can make about it. He devotes about the same space to Nyasaland. Each section dealing with any particular territory has been arranged in the same way. He opens each section with a short historical chapter which is a synopsis of the legislation controlling census taking in each territory, usually quoting verbatim the Ordinances which cover this. In this section he also considers the way in which the censuses were made.⁴⁷ After this are the following chapters : Total Population, Migration to and from the Territory, Composition of the Native Population, Composition of the non-Native Population, Native Death and Births Registration, Native Fertility, Mortality and Population Growth, and, lastly, non-Native Births and Deaths Statistics.

On the whole Kuczynski has relatively little to say on non-Native demography. He usually reports the data from the censuses with scant comment. It is when he comes to deal with the material bearing on the Native populations that he finds it necessary to go beyond the mere reporting of the statistics to an appraisal of their meaning. He is aided here by an unfailing ability to pick out fallacious reasoning in amateur demographers' reports. He is at pains to show, often not without some suggestion of dry sarcasm, that frequently the figures upon which the Administration has apparently been basing its policy do not mean at all what they are thought to mean. The reason for this

⁴⁷ Incidentally, Kuczynski distinguishes between a census, that is, an enumeration made by entering the name and particulars of each individual on a census form, and a *count*, which is an enumeration made either without any forms or with collective forms in which are entered particulars of groups (for example, the population of a village). (p. 94). Thus the sample census conducted among the African population of Northern Rhodesia in 1950 was the first census to be made of Africans in Northern Rhodesia, and, as far as I know, by these definitions a census of the African population of Nyasaland has not yet been made.

often no other than arithmetic errors. Thus he finds it impossible to publish a certain table relating the birth-rate to the basic economy of certain areas in Northern Rhodesia because they contain so many arithmetic errors (p. 494). His ability to find the inconsistencies and loose statements contained in Government reports on demographic topics is little short of uncanny and bespeaks an incredibly close reading of the material. Note, for example, how after reporting how a certain Administrative official had cast doubt on the allegation that Yao women were unwilling to bear children, he points out that it was the same official who had made the allegation five years earlier. (p. 615). As we may expect, the sources from which Kuczynski has drawn his material are mainly Government publications. But this does not mean that he has neglected other sources. He has obviously read the work of other authorities, especially of the anthropologists. He quotes several of the Rhodes-Livingstone publications.⁴⁸ In addition, he has extended his reading to the publications of the Southern Rhodesian and other neighbouring Governments where these are relevant.

We may well pause to consider the value of this work to those interested in colonial affairs. Clearly, if a student wishes to know something about the population of any of these territories up to 1945, this is the place to find it. Not only are the figures of the population quoted, but they are appraised by an expert and their value assessed. In addition to this the essays on each territory abound with interesting information of only indirect relevance to demographers. Thus, his sifting of the evidence of the medical men on the diseases of the territory makes fascinating reading. But by the very nature of the work, the author is to some extent hoist with his own petard. For many years he has been criticizing colonial population statistics. Much of the research that went into the making of this book was done before 1945. The manuscript was prepared shortly after this but only published in 1949. Even during that time certain developments have taken place, no doubt partly under the impetus of Kuczynski's own work, which tend to remedy the chaotic state of affairs he describes. Thus, for example, in 1949 a census of one African population was conducted by the sample method,⁴⁹ and in 1950 a similar census was conducted by the Central Office of Statistics in Northern Rhodesia. What results these sample censuses will bring we shall have to wait to see, but certainly in the absence of a complete census they are better than the somewhat dubious methods of estimation used previously.

⁴⁸ M. Gluckman, *The Economy of the Central Barotse Plain*, Rhodes-Livingstone Paper No. 7. Livingstone. 1941; A. I. Richards, *Bemba Marriage and Modern Economic Conditions*, Rhodes-Livingstone Paper No. 4. Livingstone, 1940; G. Wilson, *An Essay on the Economics of Detribalization* Parts I and II, Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, Nos. 5 and 6. Livingstone, 1941 and 1942.

⁴⁹ See an article by J. H. R. Shaul and C. A. L. Myburgh in *Population Studies*, iii, 3 (Dec. 1949) pp. 274-285, for a description of the methods and a preliminary statement of the results of the sample census in Southern Rhodesia.

We hope that the administrative officials concerned with this aspect of Government will not have missed this book and that its effects will be seen in future reports, if only in the more careful checking, albeit only arithmetically, of statements about population in general. Since the writing of this book we have seen the centralization of statistical services for Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia in the Central Office of Statistics in Salisbury. This is certainly a step in the right direction, the necessity of which is clearly demonstrated in this book. Its value, however, will only become effective when the officers who draft reports on labour, for example, or medical services, have read the work and have come to realize that it is important to avoid making statements which even to those not trained in demography are plainly nonsensical.⁵⁰ We can only hope that its formidable bulk does not deter those who could benefit from reading it, since, in fact, its columns of staid statistics and solemn paragraphs of figures repay the effort needed to follow them, while the apposite remarks, usually relegated to the footnotes, are salutary to those who tend to slip into careless thinking and writing.

Many of those who have had reason to use population statistics from the Colonies may feel that Kuczynski softens the effect of his remarks by understatement. Thus when he says that 'the available data are not very satisfactory', he has usually demonstrated how thoroughly threadbare they are. We may feel sometimes with Horatio

'There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave,
To tell us this.'

But the systematic marshalling of all the information in all its incompleteness and its presentation in this form may turn out to be one of the most decisive services of this great demographer to his subject—if it will lead to a New Statistics for the Colonies.⁵¹

J. CLYDE MITCHELL

⁵⁰ As for example the statement of the Director of Medical Services in 1925-6 who said: 'While it is probable that there may be an excess of births over deaths, this must, in so far as it might otherwise bring about an increase in population be greatly counter-balanced by an excessively high rate of infantile mortality.' Kuczynski remarks: 'This statement is incomprehensible. An excess of births over deaths cannot be counter-balanced by an excessive high rate of infant mortality since infant deaths are included in deaths.' (p. 516).

⁵¹ Until 1938, in Britain, the information necessary for the computation of the gross and nett reproduction rates was not recorded. In that year, The Population (Statistics) Act made legal provision for the collection of this information when births were registered. These statistics became known to demographers as 'the New Statistics', and their collection was a signal advance in demography, in fact the first major change in British vital statistics in a century. There is little doubt but that Kuczynski and his writings were one of the main forces which brought this change about.

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